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Techie who bought narcotic drugs on dark web nabbed in Khammam

Khammam: A techie who ordered and received narcotic drugs via the dark web was nabbed here on Saturday. The sleuths of RNCC Khammam with the assistance of Khammam two-town police nabbed the software engineer, who hails from Khammam.

The software engineer was nabbed following the inputs provided by the technical wing of Telangana Anti-Narcotics Bureau, () Hyderabad, said a statement from police here on Saturday. The accused had placed an order over dark web July 31, 2024 and paid for the order using crypto currency.

Varalakshmi Vratam fete at Padmavathi temple in Tiruchanoor on Friday

Tirupati: TTD is organising the grand Varalakshmi Vratam festival at Sri Padmavathi temple Tiruchanoor on Friday (August 16) with many cultural programs besides Abhishekam to Utsava idols and the presiding deity in the morning. Officials are making all arrangements for conducting the Varalakshmi Vratam at the Asthana Mandapam of the temple between 10am and 12noon. Grihastas participating in the vratam will be presented one uttariyam, one blouse, one laddu and vada as Prasadam. Later in the evening, Ammavaru will ride on Swarna Ratham on the Mada streets to bless devotees.

PM Modi lands in Kannur, heads to Wayanad



GNS News Agency, August 10

Prime Minister Narendra Modi landed at Kannur airport in Kerala, on Saturday morning. He is heading to landslide-ravaged Wayanad. The disaster took place on July 30 which left 416 dead and over 150 missing. He is

being accompanied by Union Minister of State for Tourism, actor-turned-politician Suresh Gopi, the lone BJP candidate to win from Kerala. Modi was received at the airport by Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and top Central and state gov-

Rahul Gandhi Thanks PM Modi for Wayanad Visit



GNS News Agency, August 10

New Delhi: Rahul Gandhi, the Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha, thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for visiting Wayanad and taking stock of the situation in the landslide-ravaged region.

Calling it a "good decision," the Congress leader, on Friday, expressed gratitude and his confidence that by inspecting the situation firsthand by the PM, this tragedy will be declared a "national disaster." "Thank you, Modi ji, for visiting Wayanad to personally take stock of the terrible tragedy. This is a good decision. I am confident that once the Prime Minister sees the extent of the devastation firsthand, he will declare it a national disaster," Rahul Gandhi said in a post on X. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to visit landslide-struck Wayanad in Kerala on Saturday and interact with the survivors of the disaster that hit the southern state last month. The Prime Minister is scheduled to arrive on a special flight that will land in Kannur. From Kannur, PM Modi will conduct an aerial survey of the landslide-affected areas on a helicopter. He will then visit a few relief camps where over 10,000 people are currently sheltered. Kerala Governor Arif Mohammad Khan and Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan are expected to accompany PM Modi after he arrives in Kannur. The Vijayan-led state government, as well as the Congress-led Opposition, have been demanding that the Central government declare the disaster as a national calamity. Meanwhile, the toll from the disaster has risen to 413, with 152 people still missing. The announcement of PM Modi's visit came hours after Rahul Gandhi urged the Union government to declare the Wayanad landslide as a national disaster, given the devastation it has left behind. On August 1, Rahul Gandhi, along with his sister and Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, visited the landslide-affected Chooralmala area in Kerala's Wayanad.

Harish Rao slams government for failing to address dog menace

GNS News Agency, August 10

Hyderabad: Coming down heavily on the State government for failing to address the stray dog menace, BRS leader and former Minister T Harish Rao said on Saturday attacks from stray dogs were on the rise in the absence of minimum measures to address the problem.

The government remained unmoved even after gruesome incidents like dogs eating a just born baby on the premises of the Warangal MGM hospital.

In another incident, a disabled child was mauled by dogs in Narsingi municipality in the suburbs of Hyderabad. Similarly, a four-year-old girl had succumbed to injuries she suffered in a dog attack in Ibrahimpatnam of Rangareddy district.

Vinesh Phogat CAS hearing: Arbitration court extends time, judgement on plea likely by night

Chandigarh, GNS News Agency, August 10

The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS)'s has permitted to extend handing out the verdict on wrestler Vinesh Phogat's appeal of being awarded joint-silver with Cuban wrestler Yusneily Guzman Lopez, following her disqualification from the competition for being 100 grams overweight by a day. The hearing into Phogat's appeal against her disqualification from the Olympic finals concluded late last night at the ad-hoc division of the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) with the IOA insisting that it is hopeful of a "positive resolution". This was after the CAS ad-hoc division, set up especially for dispute resolution during the Games, accepted Vinesh's appeal against her ouster for being 100gm overweight on the morning of her final against eventual gold-winner Sarah Ann



Hildebrandt of the US. "Indian Olympic Association remained hopeful of a positive resolution of wrestler Vinesh Phogat's application before the Ad hoc Division of the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) against her failed weighing-in," the IOA said in a statement. In the summit clash, Vinesh was replaced by Cuban wrestler Yusneily Guzman Lopez, who lost to her in the semifinals on Tuesday. In her appeal, the Indian has de-

manded that she be given a joint silver with Lopez as she was within the prescribed weight limit during her bouts on Tuesday. Vinesh was represented by high-profile senior advocates Harish Salve and Vidushpat Singhania. "Since the matter is sub-judice, IOA can only state that the Sole Arbitrator Dr Annabelle Bennett AC SC (Australia) heard all parties applicant Vinesh Phogat, the respondents United World Wrestling and the International Olympic Committee as well as IOA as an interested party over three hours," the IOA stated. All concerned parties were given an opportunity to file their detailed legal submissions prior to the hearing and then present oral arguments. "It was indicated by the Sole Arbitrator that the operative part of the order may be expected soon, with a detailed order with reasons to follow thereafter," the IOA said. The body's head PT Usha thanked Salve and Singhania as well as the Krida Legal team for their assistance and arguments during the hearing. "IOA deems its duty to back Vinesh and would like to reaffirm its steadfast, unflinching, and unwavering support to her, regardless of the outcome of this matter. "We are proud of her countless achievements on the wrestling mat throughout her stellar career," Usha said.

S Jaishankar meets Maldives President Muizzu, seeks to reset bilateral ties



GNS News Agency, August 10

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar visited Male to meet Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu. The discussions focused on boosting cooperation in security, trade, and development. External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar met Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu on Saturday. Both leaders discussed several issues.

After the meeting, Jaishankar wrote on his official X handle, "Privileged to call on President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu. Conveyed greetings from PM Modi." "Committed to deepening India-Maldives ties for the benefit of our people and the region," he added. After the meeting, President Mohamed Muizzu, who once ran an "India Out" campaign, stated that India has always been "one of the closest" allies and "invaluable" partners, facilitating and providing aid "whenever Maldives has needed it". Jaishankar is on an official three-day visit to the Maldives, which is to be concluded on Sunday, August 11. On Friday, he reached Male. The main purpose behind the visit is to strengthen the partnership between the two countries and

explore possibilities to enhance bilateral ties further.

The visit comes after relations between the two countries took a hit earlier this year, when three Maldivian ministers and some parliamentarians made derogatory comments about Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Tensions between both countries escalated after the Maldives, under President Mohamed Muizzu, renewed calls for the withdrawal of Indian military personnel, a move that has stirred diplomatic unease in the region. Following Muizzu's insistence, Indian troops stationed in the Maldives were replaced with civilian personnel, marking a significant shift in the country's foreign policy.

Muizzu, who is widely recognized for his pro-China orientation, gained prominence through his 'India Out' campaign, which directly opposed the policies of his predecessor, Ibrahim Mohamed Solih. Muizzu's victory in the September presidential runoff, where he ousted the India-aligned Solih, signals a potential realignment of the Maldives' geopolitical alliances. This is Jaishankar's first visit to the archipelago nation following his second term as External Affairs Minister.

"The External Affairs Minister (EAM) of India, Dr. S. Jaishankar, will pay an official visit to the Maldives from August 9-11. The visit follows the recent visit of the President of the Republic of the Maldives, H.E. Dr. Mohamed Muizzu, to India for the swearing-in ceremony of the new Cabinet and Council of Ministers," the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement. Jaishankar had previously visited the Maldives in January 2023. The Maldives is one of India's key maritime neighbours in the Indian Ocean region and the overall bilateral ties, including in the areas of defence and security, witnessed an upward trajectory under the previous government in Male.

Revanth Reddy Visits Google Headquarters in US, discusses on expansion of tech services



GNS News Agency, August 10

Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy who on a visit to the United States aimed at attracting investments and forging agreements to enhance Telangana's economic growth and job creation visited the renowned Google headquarters accompanied by Industries and IT Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu and a delegation of high-ranking officials.

During the visit, the Telangana team engaged in productive discussions with Google's senior executives. The talks centered on several key initiatives, including the expansion of tech services in Telangana, the construction of an AI City, the establishment of a Skill University, and other developmental projects designed to foster innovation and improve workforce readiness in the region.

Cabinet gives approval to PMAY-Urban 2.0



GNS News Agency, August 10

The Union Cabinet on Friday (August 9, 2024) approved the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U) 2.0 under which financial assistance will be provided to one crore urban poor and middle-class families to construct, purchase or rent a house at affordable cost.

The PMAY-U, or PM's Housing Scheme, is one of the major flagship programmes being implemented by the Union government to provide all-weather pucca houses to eligible beneficiaries in urban areas. Under PMAY-U, 1.18 crore houses have been sanctioned while more than 85.5 lakh houses have already been constructed and delivered to the beneficiaries. The financial assistance to urban poor under PMAY-U 2.0 will be provided through States and Union Territories in urban areas for the next five years. A total government subsidy of ₹2.30 lakh crore will be provided under the scheme which would have a total investment of ₹10 lakh crore, an official statement said.

In addition, the corpus fund of Credit Risk Guarantee Fund Trust has been increased from ₹1,000 crore to ₹3,000 crore to provide benefit of credit risk guarantee on affordable housing loans from banks/housing finance companies/primary lending institutions to Economically Weaker Section (EWS)/Low Income Group (LIC) segments for construction or purchase of their first home, the statement said. Further, Management of Credit Risk Guarantee Fund will be transferred to National Credit Guarantee Company from National Housing Bank. Credit Risk Guarantee Fund Scheme is being restructured and modified guidelines will be issued by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

SC to hear Kavitha's pleas challenging Delhi HC verdict denying her bail

GNS News Agency, August 10

New Delhi: The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on August 12 the pleas filed by BRS leader K Kavitha challenging the Delhi High Court's verdict denying her bail in corruption and money laundering cases linked to the alleged Delhi excise policy scam. The High Court had on July 1 dismissed Kavitha's bail pleas in both the cases, saying she was prima facie one of the main conspirators in the criminal conspiracy related to the formation and implementation of the now-scrapped Delhi Excise Policy 2021-22. According to the cause list of August 12 uploaded on the apex court's website, a Bench of Justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan is slated to hear her petitions. While dismissing her bail pleas, the High Court had said no case for grant of regular bail was made for now as the investigation is at a crucial stage.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Subsidised canteens need facelift, image upgrade

Providing food has been considered to be the ultimate service in more ways than one in Indian society. Irrespective of religion, one has heard how people have selflessly served the poor and the needy all across the nation, often spending their own resources and time to keep the 'seva' going across generations.

While such individual initiatives have been recognised, it has not always been scalable given the huge gap in demand and supply. Mercifully, for its own self-serving reasons, governments have played the welfare role and stepped in into this zone, opening subsidised canteens and attempting to give a decent meal for those who need it but cannot always afford it. In south India, with the midday meal scheme for school children taking off in Tamil Nadu and Andhra and replicated across the other states, this process was set in motion.

For the adult clientele who also need to be served, there have been Amma canteens and Anna canteens, with Indra canteens too serving the purpose in Karnataka. Telangana has an existing scheme in partnership with Akshaya Patra which has outlets in many parts of Hyderabad serving food for Rs 5, with the government subsidising a considerable part of the expenses. Politics has often interfered in the continuity of such much-needed schemes with opposing parties scrapping or renaming it whenever it is their turn to rule. In Tamil Nadu, in a rare act of generosity, the DMK government had agreed to continue the Amma canteens launched by their political rival, J Jayalalitha when she was alive.

Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, the tragic hero of Bengal's Left politics, dies at 80

GNS News Agency, August 10

Kolkata: With the death of 80-year-old Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee at his frugal two-room government apartment in south Kolkata's Palm Avenue on Thursday morning, West Bengal lost its last communist chief minister. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) or CPI (M) bade farewell to the apparatchik who repeatedly strayed from convention to emerge as a leader with an independent mind in a regimented party. Condolence messages poured in from all over, cutting across political divides, as millions of citizens mourned the death of Bhattacharjee, who is survived by his wife Mira and only child, Suchetana.

"Saddened by the passing of Shri Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, former CM of West Bengal. He was a political stalwart who served the state with commitment. My heartfelt condolences to his family and supporters. Om Shanti," wrote Prime Minister Narendra Modi, of whom the departed communist was a bitter critic. "This is an extremely sad moment for us. I have known him for several decades. We met on many occasions. I offer my condolences to members of the CPI(M) party and all his followers," said chief minister Mamata Banerjee, who is acknowledged as the sole architect of the downfall of the Left Front's 34-year-long regime in Bengal.

In the September of 2000, when the maverick Jyoti Basu took the bow from his cabinet colleagues and retired as independent India's longest serving chief minister—Sikkim's Pawan Chamling later broke that record—Bhattacharjee, her successor, was widely seen as the CPI (M)'s poster boy yearning to change the face of archaic bureaucracy in the corridors of the British-era secretariat, the Writers' Buildings, and alter the image of party cadres. Easier said than done, many of Bhattacharjee's critics said in hushed tones at the transition took place. Eleven years later, when Bhattacharjee lost by 16,770 votes to Manish Gupta—his first home secretary who joined the Trinamool Congress after retirement—the veteran communist was virtually reduced to a tragic hero. But that is not why 'Buddha Babu', a thoroughbred Bengali gentleman identified by spotless white dhoti-kurta and Kolhapuri chappals and love for Latin American literature and Tagore's works, will possibly be remembered for. Often criticised by his fellow comrades for trying to play apostle of the industry, the man who always stood his ground embraced a rough ride no Left leader experienced during Bengal's Left Front regime. Critics may argue that he failed to live up to the expectations of the masses, but Bhattacharjee did not hesitate to set up acid tests for himself.

Sounding the slogan "Krishi amader bhitti, shilpo amader bhoishyot" (agriculture is our foundation, industry is our future) at back-to-back Left rallies during his 10-year tenure, Bhattacharjee showed his determination to revive industries in a state where strikes and militant trade unionism were seen by investors as the order of the day. In 2005, he signed a number of Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs), including one with the Salim Group of Indonesia for a multi-crore special economic zone, which was later to become part of the Petroleum Chemicals and Petrochemicals Investment Region (PCPIR). The second project was Ratan Tata's long-cherished dream—the rupees one lakh car for the common man. Bhattacharjee even sounded prophetic at times. "Perform, reform or perish," he said at a public meeting in 2005. To CPI(M) Mandarins, it perhaps came as a shock. Bhattacharjee was misquoted by the media; some of them said what he meant was "perform or perish."

To counter public perception that the juggernaut did not move in the corridors of power, Bhattacharjee raised another slogan—"Do it now." It still took his government about two years to draw up blueprints for the projects. But politics at the grassroots and simmering anger over the acquisition of farmland emerged as Bhattacharjee's main challengers. The government chose Nandigram in East Midnapore for the proposed PCPIR. The Assembly standing committee on commerce and industries, headed by then Congress MLA Sudip Bandyopadhyay, gave its nod after a spot visit. With the CPI(M) in complete control of the three community blocks, the party thought acquiring land would be easy. That the CPI(M) had given wrong feedback to Writers Buildings became apparent when a notice issued by the Haldia Development Authority turned thousands of people against the party. Before the government could get a grip on the situation, Nandigram turned into a war zone.

From rural Punjab to the Olympics: Eight boys earn hockey bronze



GNS News Agency, August 10

As the Indian hockey team, led by 28-year-old captain Harmanpreet Singh, secured a 2-1 victory over Spain to win the bronze medal at the Paris Olympics, families across Punjab celebrated. The team included eight players from Punjab in the 16-member squad, with an additional two reserve players also hailing from the state. This marks India's second consecutive Olympic bronze in hockey, following their success at the Tokyo Olympics, where Punjab had 11 players in the team. Skipper Harmanpreet Singh, who hails from Timmoval village in Amritsar district, played a pivotal role, scoring two goals in the match. Six of the eight Punjab players in the Paris squad were also part of the Tokyo Olympics bronze medal-winning team.

"From the age of ten, when Harmanpreet first started playing hockey, he dreamt of winning an Olympic medal. While the team had won a historic bronze in Tokyo in 2021, this second successive medal in the Olympics is a dream come true. Since he joined the hockey academies in Ludhiana and later Jalandhar, he has stayed away from home from a young age, and whenever he returns with medals, they are prized possessions for the whole family. This Olympic bronze medal will also find a place in the trophy cabinet at our home," said Sarabjeet Singh, Harmanpreet Singh's father, speaking with Harmanpreet is one of four players from Amritsar district in the team, along with Jarmanpreet Singh (Rajdhan village), Shamsher Singh (Attari village), and Gurjant Singh (Khalaira village). Former captain Manpreet Singh, vice-captain Hardik Singh, and Mandeep Singh are from Jalandhar district, while Sukhjeet Singh hails from Jawandur (Mianwind) village in Tarn Taran district. The two reserve players, Jugraj Singh (Attari) and Krishan Pathak (Jalandhar), also come from Amritsar and Jalandhar districts, respectively.

Manpreet Singh, who led India to bronze in Tokyo, comes from Mithapur village in Jalandhar. His mother,

Manjit Kaur, shared the family's pride: "Manpreet started playing hockey in 2004, and since then, it was his dream to win an Olympic medal for India. He did that in Tokyo, and to see him win the bronze medal again in the Paris Olympics is a special feeling for all of us. We lost his father and my husband, Baljit Singh, in 2016, and he would certainly be cheering for Manpreet and the whole team from the heavens. Manpreet's wife, Illi Saddique, and daughter, Jasmine, were also in Paris, and they too must be proud of this second Olympic medal." Mandeep Singh, who also began his hockey journey in Mithapur village at the Mithapur Hockey Stadium, was part of the Indian team that won bronze in Tokyo. His parents, Ravinder Singh and Davinderjit Kaur, were overjoyed. "A young Mandeep, along with Manpreet, would be the first to train at the Mithapur Hockey Academy in the morning and the last to leave after the evening session. Later, when they trained at the Surjit Hockey Academy under coach Surjit Singh Mitha, they would either cycle there or ask us to drop them. Hockey has always been their life, and to see him return home with a second Olympic medal is one of the biggest joys for us," said Ravinder Singh, who now runs a property business. Vice-captain Hardik Singh's hockey lineage includes his grand uncle, Gurmail Singh, who was part of the 1980 Moscow Olympics gold medal-winning team. Hardik hails from Khusrapur village near Jalandhar, and his parents, Varinderpal Singh and Kanwaljeet Kaur, were in Paris to witness the victory. "My father, Pritam Singh, would take a young Hardik to play hockey at the village ground, and that's how his journey began. He would also hear tales about his grand uncle, Gurmail Singh, being part of the 1980 Moscow Olympics team. We are glad that the Singh household in Khusrapur now has three Olympic medals," said Varinderpreet Singh, Hardik Singh's father. Sukhjeet Singh, another young player from the team, faced a significant challenge when he suffered a mild paralysis six years ago due to a pinched nerve. "It was a difficult time for the whole family, but Sukhjeet's willpower and passion for hockey brought him back to the field. This Olympic medal is just the start of his dream," said his father, Ajit Singh, a former hockey player and ASI with Punjab Police. In Attari village, near the India-Pakistan border, Shamsher Singh's family also celebrated the victory. His father, Hardeev Singh, and mother, Harpreet Kaur, watched the match at their home. "Shamsher started playing hockey at the ground in Attari village before joining the Maharaja Ranjit Singh Academy and later the Surjit Hockey Academy in Jalandhar. From playing in the last village on the India-Pakistan border to being part of two Olympic bronze medal-winning Indian teams, this has to be the high point of his career," said Hardeev Singh.

Two men jump to death at two different Delhi Metro stations

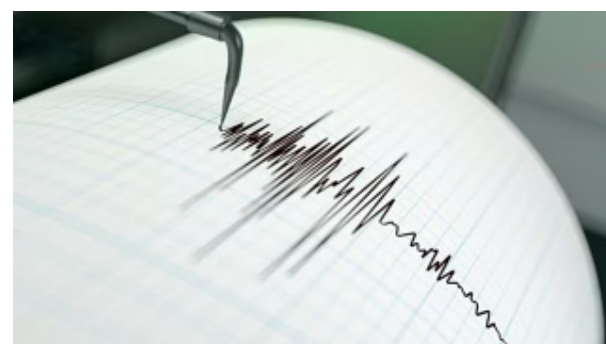


GNS News Agency, August 10

Delhi metro suicide, Metro suicide Delhi, Suicide in Delhi metro, Suicide at Delhi metro, Suicide in metro Delhi, Delhi metro station suicide, Metro Delhi suicide incident, Delhi metro suicide case, Delhi metro suicide news, Suicide at metro Delhi, Metro suicide case in Delhi, Suicide incident Delhi metro, Delhi metro suicide report No suicide note was recovered from the spot. Two men jumped to their deaths at two different Delhi

Officials said a 50-year-old man named Naveen jumped in front of a moving train at Yamuna Bank Metro station while Harish (49) jumped from Maharaja Surajmal Metro station's platform onto the street below. A suicide note and ID card were found in Naveen's pocket when he was taken to Lal Bahadur Shastri hospital. Officials said the note read, "I'm doing suicide my self, nobody forced me, my health is not good, I cannot earn money. My family is good. I don't have any problem with anybody. This is my own decision. Now life is not good (sic)." Naveen was declared dead on arrival at the hospital. Train services on the Blue Line were disrupted for 15 minutes on Thursday morning before resuming. At 1.03 pm, police received notification of another suicide at a metro station; 49-year-old Harish had jumped off the elevated Maharaja Surajmal Metro station, on the Green Line, onto the street below. No suicide note was found on the victim; he was swiftly taken to Sanjay Gandhi Hospital where he was dead on arrival. Police said the body has been preserved for an autopsy and that a crime and forensics team has been informed. Inquest proceedings under BNS Section 194 have been initiated, said police.

4.4 magnitude earthquake hits Sikkim, tremors felt in northern West Bengal



GNS News Agency, August 10

bengal, sikkim, mild earthquake, indianexpress The tremors were reportedly felt at 6.57 am and its epicentre was at a depth of 10 km below the ground, a spot two kilometres away from Soreng town in West Sikkim. Mild earthquake tremors were felt in Sikkim on Friday morning, as well as in northern Jhapaiguri in West Bengal, and across Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh. The earthquake was of 4.4 magnitude, per the National Centre for Seismology. The tremors were reportedly felt at 6.57 am and its epicentre was at a depth of 10 km below the ground, a spot two kilometres away from Soreng town in West Sikkim. People across the affected areas panicked, coming out of their homes. However, there have been no immediate reports of casualties or significant damage. Sikkim is a high-risk area in terms of earthquakes. The state was hit by a 6.9 magnitude earthquake on September 18, 2011, killing more than 100 people and causing extensive property damage.

Bengaluru police arrest 2, including CID constable, in illegal sale of Call Detail Records

GNS News Agency, August 10

bengaluru police arrests, CID constable, indian express The arrested men are Munirathna, a police constable who worked with the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and was posted in the Kolar district, and Nageshwar Reddy, a resident of Andhra Pradesh. The Bengaluru police on Thursday arrested a policeman and the alleged mastermind following investigations into the illegal sale of Call Detail Records (CDRs). The arrested men are Munirathna, a police constable who worked with the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and was posted in the Kolar district, and Nageshwar Reddy, a resident of Andhra Pradesh. In May, the Central Crime Branch (CCB) arrested seven people who were allegedly selling people's CDRs to their clients illegally. These clients included criminals who wanted to know the movements of rivals, separated married couples, and estranged lovers. Chandragupta, Additional Commissioner of Police (Crime), said the arrests were made as a follow-up to the three cases registered in May. "The detective agencies were operating from Bengaluru but the clients were from other states as well. We have gone through the contact numbers and have found out that the agency members were befriending police personnel and were managing to get the CDRs," he said. "Based on raids, it was discovered that some detective agencies were illegally collecting CDRs," said a police officer. "According to the rule, CDRs can be obtained only by law enforcement agencies and only if there is a case against a person. They will have to submit a letter stating the case and the reason to seek the CDR. But in these cases, the detective agencies were easily sourcing CDRs illegally for their clients," the police officer added. Previously, the police arrested Purushottam, 43, from Kengeri, Thippeswamy G K, 48, from Marathahalli, Mahantagowda Patil, 46, from Anjananagar, Revanth, 25, from Vijayanagar, Gurupadaswamy, 38, from Dasanapura, Rajashekar S, 32, from Vijayanagar, and Prasanna Dattatreya Garuda, 36, from Pune. These seven were linked with Rajadhani Corporate Service in Govindaraja Nagar.

Doctors scramble, patients suffer: As 4,000 contractual workers go on strike at PGI over pay issues



GNS News Agency, August 10

Due to a lack of staff, the doctors had to handle all the work. Secretary General of the PGI Joint Action Committee Sanjeev Kumar said they had a meeting with the labour commissioner and the institute administration on Wednesday, but no solution was found.

GNS News Agency, August 10

For Vijay Sandhu and his wife, PGIMER is a long way from home in Una, Himachal Pradesh. The couple stood lost outside the new outpatient department (OPD) of the institute as they could not get the registration for the urology centre done due to the ongoing strike of more than 4,000 contractual workers of 18 different categories since 6 am on Thursday. Sandhu has a stone in his kidney and has been recommended surgery. "We started at 4 am from home and when we came here, we got to know that new cards are not being made, only old patients are being seen today. So we are going back and will now come back only when the strike is called off. It will take us six hours to reach home and it means a delay in treatment. I am also experiencing pain in the abdomen," explains Sandhu, who is on a special diet also. Like Sandhu, hundreds of patients had to return home without seeing the doctors, as new cards and files were not being made, with the counters manned by regular staff, who were overburdened with old patients. 4,500 contract workers of PGIMER went on strike, majorly impacting patients who came for a check-up to the new OPD. The institute sees an OPD of more than 10,000 patients daily, but on Thursday only 3,724 patients could be attended to in the OPDs, with 80 patients in the Emergency and Trauma OPD, as no new cards were made. Doctors could not even make entries on the cards of the patients who were called for a follow-up. Only 502 patients could be registered in the General and Special OPD.

Due to a lack of staff, the doctors had to handle all the work. Secretary General of the PGI Joint Action Committee Sanjeev Kumar said they had a meeting with the labour commissioner and the institute administration on Wednesday, but no solution was found. "We have been demanding equal pay for equal work for years. In the last few months, arrears for hospital sweepers, security personnel, and the kitchen department were paid in instalments. However, there are still many cadres like hospital attendants and ward attendants, whose arrears have not been paid. We did not want to create any hindrance in the work of PGIMER, but we had no other option left," Kumar said.

The strike by the workers, which include lift operators, hospital attendants, cleaning, kitchen, laundry and security staff, ambulance drivers, paralyzed services here. Employees say that for many years, contract employees have been demanding equal pay for equal work, health

benefits, and other allowances. The PGIMER administration had promised them that all their legitimate demands would be accepted, but this did not happen. More than 60 per cent of the institute's employees are contract employees and due to their strike, essential services like cleaning, disposal of biomedical waste, and assistance to doctors and resident doctors for patient care can be affected. Regular staff is now pitching in with additional work. A senior doctor from the Department of Radiotherapy, along with two senior residents, was rushing to the wards after being in the OPD since 8 am and having already seen 100 patients till 11 am, using a make-shift file to write names and numbers of patients. "We are also giving injections and our residents are managing both the OPDs and wards, taking care of cards, files, medicines, injections, and it is sad how a handful of employees can hold us to ransom, without caring for the patients and their well-being. Ultimately, the burden falls on doctors, and we are doing what we can to help as many patients as possible. That is our job and Dharma," said a doctor, who is also wondering how the cleaning of wards and OPDs will be managed by a handful of regular employees.

There were also reports of patients breaking glass in the cardiology block of the institute as the counters were empty and patients did not know where to go. The queue in front of the fee counter in the new OPD was a long one and only one was operational. Laxmi Sud, was among the last in line, as she was hoping she would be able to pay the fee for an X-ray of her knee, the doctor had asked for. "Else I will have to take leave from school again and come from Ambala," she said. As many as 30 NSS volunteers under Project Sarathi were called in to help patients in the new OPD and also to manage the traffic and crowd in the hospital. In view of the strike, the institute administration had shifted its regular clerical staff to OPD in the morning itself to help patients and relieved the clerical staff from their routine work for the time being. The staff has been trained to make cards, entries, and depositing fees. As no new investigations were being done due to a lack of staff, Goldy Tomar from Mohali was taking his patient to a laboratory in Sector 11 for a blood test. "My relative has blood cancer and the doctor was kind to see us and said he would wait for the test report, and agreed to let us get it done from outside," Tomar said.

Residents were also sorting out patient files, apart from the regular work, and according to a doctor who was rushing from the OPD to the ward to attend to an emergency case, there is only so much doctors can do, for there are so many services that are needed to handle the high inflow of patients. Sanju drives the auto rickshaw on the PGIMER campus from 8 am to 3 pm, taking patients from one OPD to another. On Thursday, he is manning the traffic outside the new OPD as no security staff has been on duty. "I am not helping the security, but the patients, so that there are no jams and there is a smooth flow of traffic. These patients give us our daily bread. They are already so troubled, so why make their life tougher. I have asked three more drivers to take shifts to help me, till the OPD rush gets over," Sanju, who lives in Dhanas, said. According to Vikramjit Singh, President of All Contract Workers, the PGIMER administration must think of the patients and agree to their demands. "We are fighting for our rights," said Singh, who has been working here since 2010. Till Thursday afternoon, the PGIMER Joint Action Committee had announced that the strike would continue until their demands were met, but late in the evening the committee changed its decision. The committee's chairman Ashwini Munjal said that after much consideration, it has given one day's time to the administration to consider its demands. If the demands are not met by Friday, then the strike will start on Saturday, Munjal added.

'To give justice to ordinary Muslims': Rijiju defends Waqf Bill amid opposition



GNS News Agency, August 10

New Delhi: Union minority affairs minister Kiren Rijiju on Thursday introduced the controversial Waqf (Amendment) Bill 2024 in the Lok Sabha. With 40 proposed changes, the bill seeks to repeal several provisions of the current Waqf Act, which governs Waqf boards. The legislation also aims to address issues related to the powers of the Waqf Boards, registration and survey of Waqf properties, and removal of encroachment.

After a heated debate in Parliament with several opposition leaders opposing the bill and calling it "draconian and anti-Muslim," Rijiju gave an hour-long speech giving a point-by-point reply to the opposition and agreed to send the bill to a Joint Parliamentary Committee. Defending the bill, the minister said the opposition is trying to "mislead" the Muslims of this country. "With this bill, there is no interference in the freedom of any religious body....Forget about taking anyone's rights; this bill has been brought to give rights to those who never got them", he said.

Attacking Congress, Rijiju said, "Because you couldn't do it, we had to bring these amendments. We are elected representatives; support this bill, and you will get the blessings of crores of people. Some people have captured Waqf Boards, and this bill has been brought to give justice to ordinary Muslims." Rijiju also said that the bill is not taking away rights from anyone but is rather giving rights to "those so far who were suppressed and backward, like women and backward castes among Muslims."

He continued that under the existing rules, many children are not able to inherit property as those lands are given and declared as waqf. He cited an incidence where a village was declared waqf property. "Don't link this [incident] to religion...how can municipal land be declared as waqf!" he said, adding that the new bill addresses such issues. Countering the opposition's allegation that there was no consultation before introducing the bill, Rijiju said consultations took place at an "official and political level with state government representations, and consultation happened across the nation." He said, "Active consultation took place after 2015, even with Waqf board chairman, CEOs, and other representatives."

Rijiju said that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi also believes that the bill should be passed but cannot say it out loud. "They (the opposition) are misleading Muslims...Many MPs have told me that the mafia has taken over Waqf boards. Some have said that they personally support the bill but can't say it due to their political parties...We have held multi-layered country-wide consultations on this bill," the minister said. Referring to the

'Healthcare workers in Bangladesh rendered the greatest services', says Bangladesh Director general health services

GNS News Agency, August 10

At a time when Bangladesh was going through an unprecedented crisis that led to the downfall of the Sheikh Hasina government, it was healthcare professionals who rendered the greatest services. Dr Md Maruf Hasan, Officer on Special Duty, Director General Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Bangladesh told The Indian Express that healthcare professionals stood by their medical oath, above all questions and concerns. "We have never encountered such a high number of casualties in our service history, and so rehabilitation preparations are required. Plans for recovery of injured patients are a concern even for military hospitals that frequently handle gunshot wounds," Dr Hasan said.

The doctor said that lethal bullet wounds were the main cause of most injuries. "Initially, the movement used rubber bullets, but lead (Pb) pellets and larger bullets were later utilised. There are an estimated 400-500 deaths, but the number of injuries are endless," he said and added that his colleagues on the field were the heroes. These included doctors, nurses, medical students and health care workers at all levels.

Dr Hasan who was formerly the assistant registrar, surgery at Dhaka's Kurmitola General Hospital recalls trying very hard during the blockade and curfew to ensure well being of the patients. Dr Hasan recalled the tragedy that unfolded when on July 16, at Rangpur, Abu

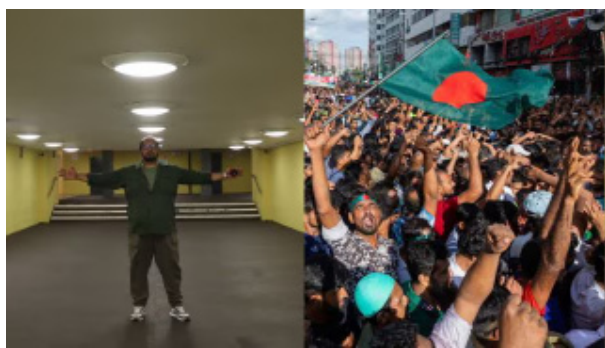
Supreme Court ruling of Brahmachari vs State of West Bengal, wherein the Court held that Waqf board does not fall within Articles 25 and 26, Rijiju said that the bill is not violative of the Constitution and added that the bill has been brought under Concurrent List Entry 10 and 28.

In response to why an amendment is needed despite the amendments made in 2013 under the United Progressive Alliance government, Rijiju said the first act came in 1954, and since then, many amendments have been done. The amendment that we are bringing is to the 1995 Act, which was amended in 2013 by the then UPA government. He said, the Sachar Committee and the Joint Parliamentary Committee have analysed the functioning of the 1995 Act and found out that it does not serve the purpose and many flaws exist. Rijiju mentioned the 1976 Waqf inquiry report, which mentioned that the Waqf Boards in control of Mutawalli need disciplining as there are many litigations and cases that need a tribunal and the auditing of the accounts needs to be done properly.

He said that the Sachar Committee report also found out that the annual income of Waqf property from many properties is very low and not justified; hence, it should be managed as per market rates. Attacking the Congress again, Rijiju said, "The Sachar Committee also recommended that the Waqf Board needs women representation in it, secretary at joint secretary level, and that a Class I officer should be in it. We are following the committee recommendations. You should be happy."

In 2005, a seven-member high-level panel headed by former Delhi high court chief justice Rajinder Sachar was formed by the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to study the social, economic, and educational condition of Muslims in India. Rijiju told the parliament that in the past one year, the government has received 194 complaints related to encroachment and illegal transfer of Waqf properties, 93 complaints against Waqf Board officials, and 279 general complaints alleging that the Waqf has been captured by the "mafia." Ahead of Rijiju's speech, the Janata Dal (United) and Telegu Desam Party, the two most important allies of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), supported the bill. The TDP said that it would not mind the bill being sent to JPC. "I appreciate the concern with which the government has brought this bill. The purpose of the donors needs to be protected. When purpose and power get misused, it is the responsibility of the government to bring reforms and introduce transparency in the system," TDP MP GM Harish Balayogi said. "We believe that the registration is going to help poor Muslims and women and bring transparency," he said.

Defending the legislation, Union minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh said that the bill has been brought to make the functioning of Waqf boards transparent. Countering the opposition's charge that the bill is against the minorities, Singh said that Congress must not talk about the minority's interest as it was involved in the killing of thousands of Punjabi Sikhs. "Who killed Indra Gandhi? Was a taxi driver responsible? Why was he killed? We witnessed the anti-Sikh riots." He also asked, "How is the bill anti-muslim?" He further criticised opposition MPs for drawing parallels between the Waqf Board and temples, questioning their understanding of the differences between these institutions. "Here, an example of Ayodhya is being given... Can you not differentiate between a temple and an institution? This is not an attempt to interfere with mosques. This law is for the institution, to make it transparent..."



Sayed, a student in the English department at Begum Rokeya University was brandishing a stick in his hand as a protest, and lost his life due to the police's open fire rubber bullets. "Most of the staff at the government hospital stayed on the premises to care for the injured even after normal working hours. Most private hospitals also tended to patients without charging money for their care," he said. After a brief interruption, other health care services, such as regular drug dispensaries for HIV/AIDS or anti-TB medications, have resumed with an executive order from the army chief, who was also the interim head of government. Now Nobel Laureate Dr Muhammad Yunus is set to take on the role of the head of the upcoming interim government.

destruction of evidence with regard to the handling of the arrest of hacker Srikrishna alias Sri in the Bitcoin case. Pujar had approached the high court for anticipatory bail in this case. On June 27, this bench had granted the bail subject to several conditions, such as appearing before the Investigating Officer (IO) in 15 days and furnishing a bond of Rs 2 lakh, appearing before the said officer when required, and refraining from threatening witnesses.

At Wednesday's hearing, Pujar's counsel argued that he had not been able to do so as the IO had not accepted the bond, saying that as the case had gone from the investigation stage to the chargesheet, he was no longer an IO with regard to this crime. The opposing counsel argued that if there was an issue, it ought to have been raised earlier as opposed to waiting until August. They also argued that Pujar had not approached the jurisdictional magistrate within time to hand over the bond instead. After hearing the arguments, the bench ordered, "Even though I am not convinced with the grounds made out for causing delay in complying, I deem it appropriate to direct the petitioner to appear before the jurisdictional magistrate in two days from today and comply with the directions."

'Greater Bengaluru Governance Bill 2024 will only take city backwards', claims study



GNS News Agency, August 10

The assessment revealed that the Bill positions the GBA as a "super municipality", weakens the powers of the mayor/councillors and lacks transparency and accountability. The assessment revealed that the Bill positions the GBA as a "super municipality", weakens the powers of the mayor/councillors and lacks transparency and accountability. A comparative study by Janaagraha, an NGO working towards transforming the quality of life in Indian cities and towns, said that the Greater Bengaluru Governance Bill, 2024, tabled by Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar in the Assembly on July 23, will only take Bengaluru "backwards". It added that the Bill lacks the vision of "metropolitan governance" which the city needs.

The comparative analysis was carried between the Greater Bengaluru Governance (GBG) Bill, 2024, proposed by the Brand Bengaluru Committee (BBC-GBG Bill), the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) Act, 2020, and the Karnataka Municipal Corporations (KMC) Act, 1976. After the assessment, it was found that the overall GBG Bill is "only half as good" as the BBC-GBG Bill. The study is a part of Janaagraha's flagship study, the Annual Survey of India's City-System (ASICS). Srikanth Viswanathan, CEO, Janaagraha, said, "The GBG Bill 2024 tabled by the state government has envisaged and construed GBA as a super municipality, almost like an outsourced wing of the state government to govern the city. It lacks the provisions of metropolitan governance, integration and coordination between civic agencies and transparency and accountability. At the municipal level, it is important to have empowered the

mayor/council to have a single point of contact for accountability." Viswanathan added, "Since, the Bill construes the GBA as a super municipality, there is very poor design of the mayor and council system. The Bill will only take Bengaluru backwards with total confusion and a dysfunctional system of municipal governance."

The GBG Bill 2024, which entails the formation of Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) and divides Bengaluru into five or 10 administrative city corporations, has received sharp criticism from civic groups, citizens, urban planners and opposition parties, owing to the lack of "progressive" aspects of governance and "complex" layers of governance which they claim will only impede the development of the city. The assessment revealed that the Bill positions the GBA as a "super municipality", weakens the powers of the mayor/councillors and lacks transparency and accountability.

The comparison between the four Bills was based on four fundamental factors, including urban planning and design, urban capacities and resources, empowered and legitimate political representation and transparency, accountability and participation. The Bills were further scored on a scale of 0-10 with higher scores indicating better performance. The study showed that overall, the GBG bill 2024 scored only 3.35 compared to 6.50 achieved by BBC-GBG Bill 2024. Further, it also revealed that, the GBG Bill had zero provisions for planning while BBC-GBG Bill mandates GBA to undertake integrated planning for the Greater Bengaluru Area and a three-tiered planning- at the metropolitan, municipal, and ward levels- with a decentralized approval process. One of the major bottlenecks in civic governance in Bengaluru is the lack of coordination between civic agencies like the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board, the Bengaluru Development Agency, Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited, Bengaluru traffic police, and others. The analysis also indicated that the GBG Bill has no mandate for municipal cadre, training for city officials, empower municipal corporation over staff and budgets, training for mayors/councillors, comprehensive civic data disclosure, ombudsman for service-related issues, digital governance policy among other provisions. After much push back from the public, the GBG Bill 2024 which was tabled in the recently concluded legislative session has been referred to the house committee for further review.

Daily testing, curbing mosquito breeding spots: Steps taken by PMC to prevent dengue, Zika virus outbreak

GNS News Agency, August 10

Zika and dengue viral infections are a significant public threat and for the health department at the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC), the focus is on strengthening surveillance and testing strategies. Close to 50 confirmed cases of dengue have been reported in the city and another 73 cases of Zika virus infection. "We are sending almost 100 samples daily to the National Institute of Virology as our priority is also identifying pregnant women with Zika virus infection," Dr Suryakant Deokar, Assistant medical officer of health, PMC,

In-charge of the insect and vector control department and coordinating the surveillance activities in the city, Dr Deokar says elimination of mosquito breeding sites has been undertaken on a war footing. "We also need cooperation from citizens who must understand that they need to keep their surroundings clean," he said. The focus is on testing samples, especially of pregnant women. The Union health ministry too had earlier issued an advisory asking states to screen expecting women and monitor the growth of their foetus, which bears the brunt of the virus attack. Zika virus is a mosquito-borne pathogen, like dengue, and spreads through the bite of infected Aedes mosquitoes, particularly Aedes Aegypti. "Zika is like any other viral infection with most cases being asymptomatic and mild, manifesting as fevers, body aches and rashes that may last a week," Dr Deokar said. While it is reported to be associated with reduced head size among the newborn, according to the Union health ministry, there is no report of any Zika-associated microcephaly in the country since 2016.

"However, we are following the instructions of the



central and state health ministry and are not taking any chances with screening of pregnant women," Dr Deokar said. As many as 649 samples of pregnant women suspected with Zika virus infection have been sent to NIV for confirmation. "Pregnant women who have tested positive for Zika are stable and undergoing regular medical check-ups," he added. Surveillance activities have been stepped up and fogging activities are underway. "The minute NIV confirms a Zika or dengue positive case, our health teams undertake container surveys. This is inspecting containers for breeding sites in that specific area and larvicides are used to eliminate the mosquito larvae and pupae before they can grow into adult mosquitoes," Dr Deokar added. The city has reported scattered cases from various areas with Erandawane, Warje and Kothrud reporting higher numbers. On four suspected deaths after the persons were confirmed with Zika virus infection, Dr Deokar said the report is being assessed by the state death audit team.

Amid growing debt, state forms panel to finish infra projects without more financial burden

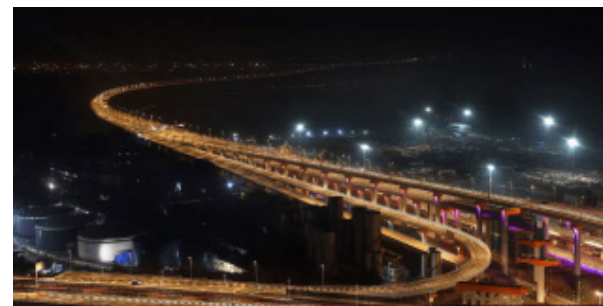
GNS News Agency, August 10

Maharashtra's infrastructure projects are likely to get impacted by the growing debt burden on the state exchequer and rise in fiscal deficit percentage to gross state domestic product ratio. The state government has set up an eight-member committee of senior officials from the administration to be headed by the chief secretary to suggest means to avoid additional financial burden on the state while completing the infrastructure projects.

The committee includes administrative heads of Finance, Planning, Revenue, Public Works Department, and Industries. The committee is tasked to study all proposed infrastructural projects in the state from all angles including required finances, need to raise funds, financial feasibility, and revenue collection post-project.

It will also explore way to raise funds for a particular project without burdening the state which include transit oriented development, additional FSI, etc. Presently, the state government is working on infrastructure projects such as the Pune ring road, the Virar-Alibaug Multimodal corridor, missing link project of Mumbai-Pune expressway, Varsova-Bandra sea link. In addition to this, the Detailed Project Report (DPR) of the Nagpur-Gondiya Expressway; Bhandara-Gadchiroli expressway; Nagpur-Chandrapur super communication expressway; Sindhkhedra - Shegaon Bhakti highway; Pune-Nasik Industrial Expressway; Nagpur - Goa Shaktipeeth highway are being prepared.

The revenue deficit for 2024-25 as per the budget estimates is Rs 20,050.69 crore and the fiscal deficit has already touched Rs 1,10,355.22 crore. With announcement of sops ahead of the Assembly polls, including CM Mahji Laddi Bahin scheme; CM Annapur scheme; free professional education for girls; CM Teertha Darshan scheme, power bill waiver of farmers, which may cost over Rs 1 lakh crore to the state exchequer, the government is now trying to keep its finances intact.



The committee is tasked to study all proposed infrastructural projects in the state from all angles including required finances, need to raise funds, financial feasibility, and revenue collection post-project.

The total debt stock of the state as per the budget estimates for 2024-25 has gone to Rs 7,82,991 crore which is 18.35 per cent to the GSDP continuing the increasing trend of last two years. In 2023-24, the total debt stock as per cent to GSDP was 17.59 and it was 17.26 in 2022-23.

According to a senior official from state's finance department, as per the Maharashtra Fiscal Responsibility and Budgetary Management Act, 2005, the fiscal deficit should ideally not exceed 3 per cent of the GSDP and the finance department works to keep it under the check. "If the state budget makes arrangement for loan or interest repayment of the debt raised for state government initiatives, special purpose vehicles, the said loan is considered as of the state's. In that case, the state's borrowing space is reduced in the net borrowing ceiling which further leads to difficulty in controlling the fiscal deficit," the official said.

Karnataka Bitcoin case: Accused cop Sridhar Pujar to appear before magistrate to comply with bail conditions



GNS News Agency, August 10

The Karnataka High Court on Wednesday directed accused police officer Sridhar Pujar to appear before the trial court to comply with his bail conditions. The order was passed by a bench consisting of Justice M G Uma.

Pujar, who is a DSP-ranked officer, and three other officers of the Central Crime Branch were booked in January for alleged illegal confinement, breach of trust, and

AAP to highlight in Delhi polls how Kejriwal being 'punished' for working for people: Sanjay Singh



GNS News Agency, August 10

New Delhi, In its campaign for the assembly polls due early next year, the A will highlight how Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is being "punished" for working for the people, party Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh said on Thursday. The Aam Aadmi Party on Thursday held a meeting to discuss the upcoming Haryana and Delhi Assembly polls. The meeting was attended by senior party leaders. "Last week also there was a meeting. We have prepared many plans how we will begin our campaign at booth level and reach out to people on the basis of the work done in education and health. "We will talk to people about whatever is happening with us. Kejriwal is diabetic and his sugar levels have gone down several times in jail. They are playing with his life by arresting him in different cases," he said. Singh alleged that Kejriwal was

arrested in a fake case by the CBI. The Delhi chief minister is being punished for working for Delhi, he claimed. "We will highlight this through our door to door campaign," Singh added.

After the Lok Sabha poll results, A Delhi convener Gopal Rai had said his party's alliance with the Congress was only for the Lok Sabha elections and had hinted that the ruling party in the city will go solo in next year's assembly polls in Delhi. Last month, the party had announced that it will contest all 90 assembly seats in Haryana. It had contested the Lok Sabha elections in alliance with its INDIA bloc partner Congress in Haryana, Delhi and Gujarat. The alliance drew a blank in Delhi with the BJP effecting a clean sweep for the third consecutive time. The A had contested from Kurukshetra but lost to the BJP. Talking about the campaign in Haryana, he said it is going well and said they have a target of holding 45 public meetings in 15 days. "This will be completed by August 12. The campaign is progressing well and we will also do the work of taking the promises of his guarantee card to people," he added. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's wife Sunita Kejriwal had last month launched "Kejriwal's guarantees" for poll-bound Haryana, promising free electricity, free medical treatment, free education, ₹1,000 per month to every woman in the state and employment for youngsters. The Haryana Assembly polls are due later this year. This article was generated from an automated news agency feed without modifications to text. The Hindustan Times YouTube channel now has 7 million subscribers. We thank our viewers for their support. Follow the channel for exclusive video news on politics, sports, entertainment & more. Click here.

Speech, hearing impaired son of constable helps Mumbai Police in murder probe

GNS News Agency, August 10

Police said it faced a challenge because the accused in a murder case is speech and hearing impaired, making it difficult to question him about the crime. A constable's speech and hearing-impaired son used sign language to communicate with an accused who shares the same disability, helping the Mumbai Police in a murder investigation. Police said the investigation began after a 30-year-old man, Arshad Ali Sadique Ali Shaikh was found dead, with his body stuffed in a trolley bag at Dadar railway station on August 5.

The Dadar railway police faced a challenge because the accused, Jay Chawda is speech and hearing impaired, making it difficult to question him about the crime. "We were seeking the address of Sadhna Vidyalaya, which is a school for speech and hearing impaired children. We needed someone to talk to the accused using sign language as part of the probe," PTI quoted a police official as saying. The police while trying to locate the school came across their colleagues from the RAK Marg police station, who were on patrol duty in Wadala including constable Rajesh Satpute. Police said it was Satpute who informed them that the school was in Dadar and that his 23-year-old son Gaurav, who is speech and hearing impaired, was also an alumnus of the institution. The railway police team went to Satpute's residence at 2 am and brought Gaurav to the Dadar railway police station. The police team gave a questionnaire to Gaurav and asked him to communicate with Chawda,



who was apprehended at Dadar railway station with the bag. Gaurav's interaction with Chawda provided details of the crime, the co-accused and the motive behind the crime. Police also said that three persons including deceased Arshad Ali's wife, who is allegedly in an extramarital relationship with Chawda. Constable Rajesh Satpute said he was proud that his son managed to help police in a murder case. "He studied in Sadhna Vidyalaya till Class X. He has also done a pipe fitter course from Mazagon Dock Limited. It was Gaurav's efforts due to which the police could understand the entire chain of events," Satpute told PTI. The Hindustan Times YouTube channel now has 7 million subscribers. We thank our viewers for their support. Follow the channel for exclusive video news on politics, sports, entertainment & more. Click here.

Delhi LG gives nod to prosecute IAS officer for 'forging' signs of chief secretaries

GNS News Agency, August 10

New Delhi, Delhi Lt Governor V K Saxena has granted sanction for the prosecution of IAS officer Udit Prakash Rai for allegedly forging the signatures of three chief secretaries of two Union Territories on his annual performance appraisal reports, Raj Niwas officials said on Thursday. A 2007 batch IAS officer, Rai allegedly forged the signatures of his reviewing authority the chief secretaries of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Delhi between 2017 and 2021, officials said. A criminal case of forgery has been registered against Rai at the IP Estate Police Station on the complaint of the Special Secretary of the Delhi government, they added.

Rai, in his annual performance appraisal reports for the period April 1, 2017, to October 8, 2017 and October 9, 2017, to March 31, 2018, forged the signatures of his then reporting authority S C L Das, the then principal secretary in Andaman and Nicobar administration and the reviewing authority, Anindo Majumdar, the then chief secretary there, the Directorate of Vigilance official said. In the AR for the period April 1, 2019, to July 30, 2019, Rai forged the signatures of the reporting authority, Vikram Dev Dutt, the then principal secretary in Andaman and Nicobar administration and reviewing authority, Chetan Bhushan Sanghi, the then chief secretary there.

Rai was posted as DM in the Andaman and Nicobar administration, the official shared. When Rai was transferred to Delhi, he was posted as director in the Delhi

government. In the successive ARs for the period August 31, 2020, to March 31, 2021, Rai allegedly forged the signatures of his reporting authority, H Rajesh Prasad, the then principal secretary, and the signature of the reviewing authority, Vijay Kumar Dev, the then chief secretary of Delhi, the official claimed.

During the investigation, it came to light that Rai, deliberately filled his ARs manually and not online, through the SPARROW Portal, citing technical glitches he added. "However, during the inquiry, two officers Anindo Majumdar and Vijay Kumar Dev, denied having reviewed the ARs of Rai and confirmed that the signatures on his ARs were forged. "Even the FSL report confirmed that the specimen signatures and handwritings of Anindo Majumdar and Vijay Kumar Dev did not match with those on Rai's ARs," he added. The matter was earlier placed before the LG and due to its seriousness, he had recommended initiating disciplinary and criminal action against Rai, now posted in Mizoram and under suspension. Also, since Rai is posted outside Delhi, his case was not required to be routed through NCCSA. Rai is under suspension in another corruption-related matter wherein he was charged with taking graft money from an engineer in the Delhi Agriculture Marketing Board while serving as its vice-chairman. He has also been charged with demolishing a heritage structure for the construction of his official residence in Delhi's Jal Vihar, while he was serving as the CEO of DJB, for ₹5 crore.

conspiracy hatched by Sandeep Singh, Assistant Director, Enforcement Directorate HQ, New Delhi with unknown others to obtain undue advantage... of ₹20 lakh by himself and through other person from the complainant Vipul Thakkar for not arresting his son Nihar Thakkar in the matter being investigated by the ED," the CBI FIR stated. Yadav, who is an officer from the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), was caught red-handed while accepting the bribe in the national capital by the Mumbai unit of the agency, the officials said. The ED official was arrested from the Lajpat Nagar Area in Delhi, a senior CBI official told PTI. The investigation agency moved forward with the arrest after a trap was laid to catch the accused red-handed with the help of the jeweller. Notably, in Aug 2023, the CBI arrested an Assistant Director of ED along with six other officials for accepting bribes of ₹5 crore to save Delhi businessman Aman Dhall in the Delhi liquor scam case.

Rakhi trouble? NCPCR issues directive to states/UTs against school punishment



GNS News Agency, August 10

The apex child rights body National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has issued a directive to the education departments of all states and union territories, urging them to prevent instances of corporal punishment and discrimination against children during the upcoming festival season.

In a letter dated August 8, Priyanka Kanoongo, chairperson of the NCPCR, expressed concern over the reports of children being harassed and discriminated against by school teachers and staff during festivals. The letter highlighted incidents where children were not allowed to wear traditional symbols of festivity, such as

rakhis, tilaks, or mehendi, and were subjected to both physical and mental harassment as a result. Kanoongo alleged that such actions violate Section 17 of the Right to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, which prohibits corporal punishment in schools. "As the festival season approaches, it is imperative that schools do not engage in practices that expose children to any form of corporal punishment or discrimination," the letter read. Priyanka didn't tie rakhi to Rahul Gandhi? Cong rubbishes BJP's claim, 'Not all families...'

The NCPCR requested that all states and UTs issue immediate directions to the relevant authorities to ensure compliance with these guidelines. The Commission also asked for a compliance report to be submitted, along with a copy of the order issued in this regard, by August 17, 2024. The directive comes ahead of Raksha Bandhan, observed annually on the full moon day of the Shravan month as per the Hindu calendar, which will be celebrated across the country on August 19. The NCPCR, a statutory body established under the Commission for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005, is responsible for safeguarding the rights of children across the country, including ensuring the effective implementation of laws like the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.

Anxiety on rise in rural India: Report

GNS News Agency, August 10

New Delhi, Anxiety levels have increased in rural India, a report released on Thursday revealed, stating that nearly 45 per cent respondents said they have suffered anxiety.

The prevalence of mental health disorders in India has risen steadily in recent years, contributing to the escalating public health concern, according to the State of Healthcare in Rural India Report - 2024, which covered a total of 5,389 households in 21 states. "One of the major findings of the survey was related to mental health, revealing that anxiety levels have risen in rural India, making it no longer just an 'urban' phenomenon," the report said.

"The study reveals that 45 per cent of the respondents across gender most of the time have anxiety and worry that impacts their state of mind. The data reveals that anxiety and worry impact mental health much more

among the older cohorts than those who are younger," it added. The report said that 40 per cent of those aged 18-25 years admitted feeling anxiety, with the proportion increasing to 53 per cent among those who are 60 and above.

The report also talked about the concept of "Neighbourhoods of Care" as a fundamental shift in the approach to health delivery. The report found that 73 per cent of rural households with elderly members need constant care. Yet, engaging an external caregiver as a paid service does not seem to have a great deal of traction in rural India, with only 3 per cent of such households ever having opted for the same. The majority prefer family caregivers, predominantly female, highlighting the need for caregiver training on home-based care. The survey was jointly carried out by Transform Rural India and its initiative, the Development Intelligence Unit, the report said.

Puja Khedkar moves Delhi HC seeking anticipatory bail in cheating case

GNS News Agency, August 10

New Delhi, Former IAS probationer Puja Khedkar, who has been accused of cheating and wrongly securing OBC and disability quota benefits, on Thursday approached the Delhi High Court seeking anticipatory bail in the criminal case against her. Khedkar allegedly misrepresented information in her application for the UPSC Civil Services Examination, 2022 to get reservation benefits.

On July 31, the Union Public Service Commission cancelled Khedkar's candidature and debarred her from future exams. On August 1, a sessions court here had denied anticipatory bail to her and said there are serious allegations against her which "require a thorough investigation". Khedkar, who has not been arrested in the case, had approached the sessions court, saying she faces "immediate threat of arrest".

"Custodial interrogation of the accused is required to unearth the whole conspiracy and to establish involvement of the other persons involved in conspiracy," the sessions court had said, adding that the case is "only the tip of the iceberg". The judge had directed the Delhi Police to conduct its investigation "in all fairness" to find out candidates recommended in the recent past who might



have illegally availed of such benefits, and whether some insider from the UPSC also helped Khedkar. In response to Khedkar's claim of having been falsely implicated in the case and being a victim of media trial and witch-hunt, the sessions court had said the argument was not tenable because there were sufficient incriminating material on record. "The conspiracy has been hatched in a pre-planned manner. The conspiracy was executed by the accused in many years. The accused alone could not have executed the conspiracy without the assistance of some outsider or insider," it had said.

RSS-linked group protests outside Bangladesh High Commission after Hindu homes attacked

GNS News Agency, August 10

The Hindu Jagran Manch, an RSS-affiliated activist group, protested outside the Bangladesh High Commission in Kolkata in the wake of attacks on the Hindu communities in Bangladesh, amid political unrest. The Bangladesh Hindu, Buddhist, Christian Unity Council (BHCUC) told Reuters, that 200-300 mostly Hindu homes had been vandalised after Sheikh Hasina's resignation on Monday. Hindus form 8 per cent of Bangladesh's 170 million population and have historically been loyalists of the Awami League party, which is seen as largely secular. The ouster of Sheikh Hasina and the absence of a government for the past week has opened up the potential for atrocities against vulnerable populations such as Hindus, Christians and Buddhists.

Homes of the Muslim minority sect of Ahmadi had also been torched on Monday, following the fall of Sheikh Hasina and the Awami League's government. Students who led the protests have urged people not to target minor-



The Hindu Jagran Manch, an RSS-affiliated activist group, protested outside the Bangladesh High Commission in Kolkata in the wake of attacks on the Hindu communities in Bangladesh, amid political unrest.

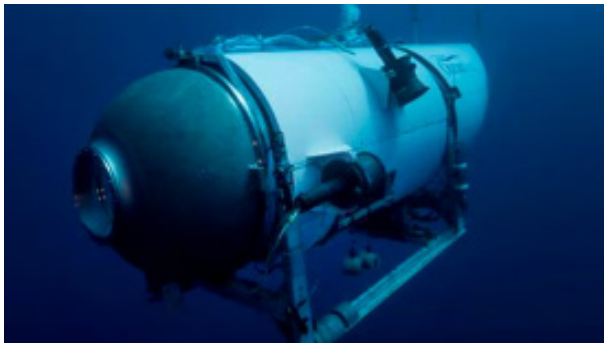
ity communities, even offering to guard temples from vandals. However, Reuters reported that several Hindu community leaders feel unsafe due to a lack of a functioning government. Also Read: After Ramdev, Sadhguru urges India to 'act' as Hindus attacked in Bangladesh: 'Can't be Maha-Bharat if... External affairs minister S. Jaishankar on Tuesday said the Centre was "moni-

toring the situation with regard to the status of minorities". He also said that until law and order is restored they will have to keep an eye on the situation in the neighbouring country.

Taking a dig at the central government, Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to stop atrocities against Hindus the same way he claimed to have briefly

stopped the war between Russia and Ukraine to rescue stranded students. Meanwhile, Bangladesh is all set to form its first interim government after 15 years of governance by Sheikh Hasina. Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus will be sworn in at 8 pm on Thursday, after being awarded the position with the consensus of civic groups, student protestors and the military.

OceanGate sued over Titan Sub implosion as family of French explorer seeks \$50 million



GNS News Agency, August 10

The family of a French explorer who died in a submersible implosion has filed a more than \$50 million lawsuit, saying the crew experienced "terror and mental anguish" before the disaster and accusing the sub's operator of gross negligence. Paul-Henri Nargeolet was among five people who died when the Titan submersible imploded during a voyage to the famed Titanic wreck site in the North Atlantic in June 2023. No one survived the trip aboard the experimental submersible owned by OceanGate, a company in Washington state that has since suspended operations.

Known as "Mr. Titanic," Nargeolet participated in 37 dives to the Titanic site, the most of any diver in the world, according to the lawsuit. He was regarded as one of the world's most knowledgeable people about the famous wreck. Attorneys for his estate said in an emailed statement that the "doomed submersible" had a "troubled history," and that OceanGate failed to disclose key facts about the vessel and its durability. According to the lawsuit, the Titan "dropped weights" about 90 minutes into its dive, indicating the team had aborted or attempted to abort the dive.

"While the exact cause of failure may never be determined, experts agree that the Titan's crew would have realized exactly what was happening," the lawsuit states. "Common sense dictates that the crew were well aware they were going to die, before dying." The lawsuit goes on to say: "The crew may well have heard the carbon fiber's crackling noise grow more intense as the weight of the water pressed on Titan's hull. The crew lost communications and perhaps power as well. By experts' reckoning, they would have continued to descend, in full knowledge of the vessel's irreversible failures, experiencing terror and mental anguish prior to the Titan ultimately imploding." A spokesperson for OceanGate declined to comment on the lawsuit, which was filed Tuesday in King County, Washington. The defendants must respond to the complaint in the coming weeks, court papers state. The lawsuit describes Nargeolet as an employee of OceanGate and a crew member on the Titan. The suit

also criticizes Titan's "hip, contemporary, wireless electronics system, and states that none of the controller, controls or gauges would work without a constant source of power and a wireless signal."

Though OceanGate designated Nargeolet as a member of the crew, "many of the particulars about the vessel's flaws and shortcomings were not disclosed and were purposely concealed," the attorneys, the Buzbee Law Firm of Houston, Texas, said in their statement. Tony Buzbee, one of the attorneys on the case, said one of the suit's goals is to "get answers for the family as to exactly how this happened, who all were involved, and how those involved could allow this to happen."

Concerns were raised in the aftermath of the disaster about whether the Titan was doomed due to its unconventional design and its creator's refusal to submit to independent checks that are standard in the industry. Its implosion also raised questions about the viability and future of private deep-sea exploration. The U.S. Coast Guard quickly convened a high-level investigation, which is ongoing. A key public hearing that is part of the investigation is scheduled to take place in September. The Titan made its last dive on June 18, 2023, a Sunday morning, and lost contact with its support vessel about two hours later. After a search and rescue mission that drew attention around the world, the wreckage of the Titan was found on the ocean floor about 984 feet (300 meters) off the bow of the Titanic, about 435 miles (700 kilometers) south of St. John's, Newfoundland. OceanGate CEO and cofounder Stockton Rush was operating the Titan when it imploded. The lawsuit describes Rush as "an eccentric and self-styled 'innovator' in the deep-sea diving industry" and names his estate as one of the defendants. In addition to Rush and Nargeolet, the implosion killed British adventurer Hamish Harding and two members of a prominent Pakistani family, Shahzada Dawood and his son Suleman Dawood. The company that owns the salvage rights to the Titanic is in the midst of its first voyage to the wreckage site in years. Last month, RMS Titanic Inc., a Georgia-based firm, launched its first expedition to the site since 2010 from Providence, Rhode Island.

Nargeolet was director of underwater research for RMS Titanic. He was part of an expedition to visit the Titanic site in 1987, shortly after its location was discovered, and had supervised the salvage of innumerable Titanic artifacts, the lawsuit states. His estate's attorneys described him as a seasoned veteran of underwater exploration who would not have participated in the Titan expedition if the company had been more transparent. The lawsuit blames the implosion on the "persistent carelessness, recklessness and negligence" of OceanGate, Rush and others. "Decedent Nargeolet may have died doing what he loved to do, but his death — and the deaths of the other Titan crew members — was wrongful," the lawsuit states.

We have followed very closely what has happened in Bangladesh: German envoy Ackermann

GNS News Agency, August 10

New Delhi, Philipp Ackermann, Germany's envoy to India, on Thursday said his country has followed "very closely" the situation in Bangladesh and that he was really keeping his fingers crossed that the military will guarantee a "peaceful transition" to a civilian government in Dhaka as quickly as possible. In an interview to PTI at the German embassy here, he also said it is a "really good development" that Muhammad Yunus will be sworn in as the head of the interim government.

Yunus, 84, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006 for his pioneering work on micro-lending, was appointed by President Mohammed Shahabuddin as the head of the interim government after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled to India following widespread protests against her regime over a controversial quota system in jobs. Following the fall of the Hasina government, several police stations were attacked and set on fire, leading to many officers evacuating their stations due to the threat of more attacks. Over 500 people, including police personnel, have been killed in the violence centring the students' movement.

"Let me say at the outset, we have followed very

closely what has happened in Bangladesh. We have seen the recent developments. We have followed with concern the ... casualties. But, I must say today is a day... Muhammad Yunus will be sworn in as the interim head of the government and I think that's a really good development, and I really keep my fingers crossed that the military will guarantee a peaceful transition to a civilian government as quickly as possible," Ackermann told PTI on the sidelines of an event at the embassy. Asked what could be the immediate fallout of this political crisis on the neighbourhood, he said, "any development like this has an impact on the region. But, as quick as... the better we go quickly back to civilian government there, and I see some hope for that."

Yunus Thursday promised to deliver a government which assures safety to its citizens and urged them to assist him in rebuilding the protest-torn Bangladesh, as he described the ouster of Hasina as the country's "second independence". This article was generated from an automated news agency feed without modifications to text. The Hindustan Times YouTube channel now has 7 million subscribers. We thank our viewers for their support. Follow the channel for exclusive video news on politics, sports, entertainment & more. Click here.

Africa CDC likely to declare mpox public health emergency next week

GNS News Agency, August 10

KINSHASA, - Africa's public health agency is set to declare an mpox emergency as early as next week, saying the viral infection's rate of spread is alarming, as a new variant moves across Democratic Republic of Congo's borders. Mpox is transmitted through close contact and causes flu-like symptoms and pus-filled lesions. Most cases are mild but it can kill. The new variant, known as Clade Ib and circulating mostly in Congo, appears to spread more easily through routine close contact, as seems to be the case among children. The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention Director General, Jean Kaseya, said on Thursday that reported cases in Africa had risen by 79% from 2022-2023 and by 160% from 2023-24. "This is one of the aspects that is alarming us," he said.

Kaseya added he would have calls with the heads of the African Union and the African Union Commission on Tuesday to "get their blessing" and guidance to declare a public health emergency - a new power for the continental body. He said that most likely he would make the declaration next week. Doing so would enable the Africa CDC to better coordinate cross-border responses and would obligate member countries to notify new cases to the continental body, he said.

It would also enable mobilisation of domestic and international resources and accelerate vaccine research and development, Kaseya said, adding he had been in talks with executives of the German drugmaker BioNTech about raising vaccine output after the likely declaration next week. The World Health Organization said Africa is experiencing an unprecedented rise in cases this year.

Congo has seen over 13,000 suspected mpox cases including 503 deaths so far this year, the WHO's spokesperson in Congo told Reuters, taking the total number of cases there since the start of 2023 to about 27,000, with more than 1,000 deaths. To the east of Congo, Rwanda, Uganda and Kenya, which were previously unaffected



Kaseya added he would have calls with the heads of the African Union and the African Union Commission on Tuesday to "get their blessing" and guidance to declare a public health emergency - a new power for the continental body

by mpox, have all reported cases of the new variant since mid-July, a WHO statement said. "Further analysis is required to better understand the patterns of transmission to refine the response to the outbreak," the U.N. agency said.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued a second health alert on Wednesday to notify clinicians and health departments about the deadly new strain. WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has promised to convene an emergency committee to discuss whether the outbreak in Congo represents a public health emergency of international concern. On Monday, Africa CDC said it had been granted \$10.4 million in emergency funding from the AU for its mpox response. This article was generated from an automated news agency feed without modifications to text. The Hindustan Times YouTube channel now has 7 million subscribers. We thank our viewers for their support. Follow the channel for exclusive video news on politics, sports, entertainment & more. Click here.

Banksy unleashes animals on London, but what do they mean?

GNS News Agency, August 10

Four Banksy murals which have appeared in London this week have left many pondering the meaning behind the elusive street artist's latest work. It began with the mountain goat on Monday, appearing to be perched on a ledge with rocks falling off and depicted in Banksy's signature stencil style on a wall in Richmond, west London. Next came two elephant heads, peering out of two blocked out windows on the side of a house in affluent Chelsea, followed by three monkeys which appear to be hanging from a railway bridge near east London's Brick Lane. The silhouette of a wolf, howling at the sky, appeared on a satellite dish atop a heavily graffitied building in Peckham, southeast London, on Thursday. Banksy has posted pictures of each on his Instagram account.

London's Metropolitan Police said the satellite dish had been reported stolen within hours of being unveiled. Pictures in local media showed it being removed by a person who had their face covered with a mask. Theories swirled on social media as to the meaning of the works, by an artist who has highlighted themes such as war and

climate change in his previous work. Some speculated they could be related to the riots and racist attacks that have swept the country in the past week, others to the idea that humanity is seeding its own downfall. "Nice one Banksy. I see this as a critique on the wild and chaotic behaviour currently erupting across the UK. Far right thugs on the prowl," one user "barrybrexiter" commented on Banksy's Instagram post. Another "leticia_vega" wrote "Humanity is not going to last ... animals will be taking over." The Bristol-based artist's last mural, also in London, depicted green paint sprayed across the side of a building to mimic the foliage of a real, heavily pruned tree that stands a few metres in front of it. Many took that mural as speaking to a need to preserve nature. In December, Banksy depicted three drones on a stop sign, again in Peckham. It was stolen very shortly after it went up. This article was generated from an automated news agency feed without modifications to text. The Hindustan Times YouTube channel now has 7 million subscribers. We thank our viewers for their support. Follow the channel for exclusive video news on politics, sports, entertainment & more. Click here.

Trump back in dead-even race? Ex-President reportedly 'upset' about Harris' surging poll numbers, fundraising record



GNS News Agency, August 10

While both Democrats and Republicans are escalating their efforts to woo American voters to secure the White House seat, Donald Trump is said to have been complaining about the "unfair" move of fielding Kamala Harris against him rather than Joe Biden. According to Trump insiders, the Republican leader is allegedly snapping at his campaign staff over Harris' funding total and the huge and rowdy audiences she has been gathering to her rallies in comparison to his. (AP)

According to Trump insiders, the Republican leader is allegedly snapping at his campaign staff over Harris' funding total and the huge and rowdy audiences she has been gathering to her rallies in comparison to his. (AP) With the addition of Gov. Tim Walz (D-MN) as the vice presidential candidate, the Harris campaign is beginning to annoy Trump in a different way, the Washington Post reported.

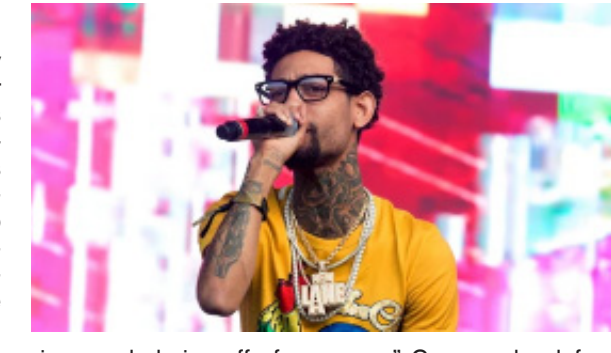
According to Trump insiders, the Republican leader is allegedly snapping at his campaign staff over Harris' funding total and the huge and rowdy audiences she has been gathering to her rallies in comparison to his. The photos of boisterous and enthusiastic fans of Harris and Walz in Philadelphia, Wisconsin, and Michigan over the past several days have driven Trump's ire, which may result in a campaign shake-up, the report stated. Trump planning to change campaign staff?

Trump now finds himself back in a "dead-even race", according to five people close to the campaign. "In the face of new Democratic momentum, he has grown increasingly upset about Harris' surging poll numbers and media coverage since replacing Biden on the ticket." Not just this, he has reportedly started asking friends and allies about his campaign staff performance and there are chances that it may lead to staff changes. However, Trump "has not confirmed" if he planning such move and has rather extended support for campaign staff in recent days, the Post's Josh Dawsey and Michael Scherer reported, citing a person close to the GOP leader. Moreover, Trump has questioned his staff "why Harris is raising so much more money than him". According to the insiders, the GOP presidential candidate's Tuesday afternoon post on Truth Social, which included some "nicknames, falsehoods and baseless accusations" against Harris, suggested he was still "steaming". Harris, the presumed Democratic Party nominee, has raised a record \$310 million in July, according to a statement released by her team on Friday. She is running against Trump in the US presidential race. In contrast, the Trump campaign raised \$138.7 million in July and currently has \$327 million in cash on hand. Harris, 59, is the sole contender who has submitted documents to represent the Democratic Party as the nominee for the presidential election scheduled for November 5. Her nomination came after Joe Biden's exit from the race.

PnB Rock murder: California father found guilty for involving son, 17, in rapper's killing

GNS News Agency, August 10

A 42-year-old California man was found guilty Wednesday in the robbery and fatal shooting of rapper PnB Rock, born Rakim Allen, at a South Los Angeles restaurant in 2022. The conviction comes after a deliberation of a two-week trial and four hours. A Los Angeles County found Freddie Trone guilty of one count of murder, two counts of robbery and one count of conspiracy to commit robbery. According to the Associated Press' report, Allen's murder trial also recognised that the 42-year-old father had told his then-17-year-old son to commit the crime in 2022 as he was having lunch with his girlfriend Stephanie Sibounheuang at Roscoe's Chicken and Waffles on West Manchester Avenue. His son, though not named publicly due to his age at the time of the fatal shooting, was also seen as an accessory to the Philadelphia rapper's murder. The no-19-year-old boy has been charged with murder. A judge argued that he is not competent to be put on trial and is, therefore, still in a juvenile detention centre. The LA District Attorney's Office has confirmed that he will undergo "mental competency proceedings" on August 29. The Los Angeles County jury also convicted co-defendant Tremont Jones. The 46-year-old man, who was seen fist-bumping Trone in a parking lot surveillance footage a half hour before Allen's murder, has been found guilty of two counts of second-degree robbery and one count of conspiracy to commit robbery. Though not charged with murder, he was accused of informing Trone about the rapper's presence at the restaurant and that he was wearing luxury items on the day of the tragedy. His attorney, David Hass, will reportedly appeal the decision. A third defendant, Shauntel Trone - Trone's wife, is scheduled to be sentenced on January 16, 2025. She pleaded no contest to accessory after the fact in July. Contextual history of PnB Rock's September 2022 killing Deputy District Attorney Timothy Richardson told the Jury that the 42-year-old suspect had "sent his son out on a coordinated act to rob watches,



rings and chains off of a person." Conversely, defence attorney Winston McKesson argued that Trone's son acted independently and that the "only conclusion that is consistent with justice is that Freddie Trone is not guilty of these charges." Aligning with McKesson's claims, Trone confessed to being in the parking lot to find customers for his nearby beauty shop. Denying any connection to the murder, he called the crime "heinous" and labelled his son as "dangerous." The harrowing incident took place on September 12, 2022, when an individual approached Allen and his girlfriend and "demanded" the rapper to hand over his jewellery. Allen was eventually shot several times, and his belongings were stolen. The late Philadelphia rapper and his girlfriend Stephanie Sibounheuang share a 4-year-old daughter. The prosecutor listed the motive for the crime as "about a half a million dollars worth of jewellery." He added that while Trone drove his son to and from the restaurant, he never stepped inside himself in PnB Rock's presence. Despite Trone's vigorous denials, the prosecutor asserted that Trone, his teenage son and Jones had "coordinated actions" that were "not a coincidence." According to Fox LA, Trone's attorney expressed his disappointment with the outcome. "I think the problem is whenever you have a Black man charged in a violent crime and no African Americans on the jury, it is a major problem, he told City News Service on Wednesday.

Why Suzlon Energy shares hit 5% upper circuit today



Suzlon Energy share price: The stock of the renewable energy company reached a 52-week high of Rs 73.05 and remained locked in the upper circuit. Shares of Suzlon Energy settled at Rs 66.26 on Tuesday, falling 2.43 per cent for the day, with a total market capitalization of little more than 90,000 crore. Shares of Suzlon Energy settled at Rs 66.26 on Tuesday, falling 2.43 per cent for the day, with a total market capitalization of little more than 90,000 crore.

Shares of Suzlon Energy surged to a fresh 52-week high on Thursday, even as the broader market showed weakness. The stock of the renewable energy company reached a 52-week high of Rs 73.05 and remained locked

in the upper circuit. It may be noted that Suzlon Energy shares are trading above their 5-day, 10-day, 20-day, 50-day, 100-day, and 200-day moving averages, signifying strong buying interest in both the short and long term. Over the past year, the stock has surged 287% from its 52-week low. It is currently trading at a 14-year high, having fallen to a 52-week low of Rs 18.84 on August 9, 2023. Suzlon's market cap has climbed to over Rs 99 crore. The stock has gained 293% in a year and nearly 90% this year. Laxmikant Shukla, Technical Research Analyst at YES Securities, told Business Today that he is bullish on the stock. He recommends buying with a price target of Rs 80 and a stop loss of Rs 65. Shukla noted that Suzlon is showing signs of revival after a profit-booking phase where prices dipped from Rs 72 to Rs 65. The stock has since stabilised and is trading above its key moving averages, forming bullish candles. Shukla sees this as a buying opportunity, expecting a pullback to Rs 80. Meanwhile, Brokerage Geojit Financial Services had previously set a price target of Rs 73, which the stock met today. It anticipates strong revenue growth and return on equity (ROE) for Suzlon, driven by government tendering and demand from commercial and industrial customers. The brokerage projected a revenue CAGR of 53% and EPS growth of 66%, resulting in improved ROE. Foreign brokerage Morgan Stanley has maintained an 'overweight' rating on Suzlon with a price target of Rs 73.40 per share.

Gautam Adani has not set a date for retirement, says his flagship firm

Billionaire Gautam Adani has not set any specific date or point in time for retiring and handing over his USD 210-billion ports-to-energy conglomerate to his sons and nephews, his group's flagship firm informed the stock exchanges. In the filing, Adani Enterprises Ltd said the group chairman has been "misquoted" in a media report "about heirs and equal beneficial interest in the family trust".

"In a recent interview, Mr. Gautam Adani shared his thoughts on succession planning to ensure business sustainability. He said that succession is not just one event, but a journey, and that it must be organic, gradual and systematic," the firm said. He, however, did not set 70 years as the date of his retirement as stated in the report.

"Mr. Adani did not specify any date or point in time," the company said. "Further, Mr. Adani has been misquoted about heirs and equal beneficial interest in the family trust. He had mentioned the involvement of his two sons and two nephews in various businesses of the group." Bloomberg News on August 5 reported that Adani, 62, plans to step down at 70. Without giving a direct quote for the statement, Bloomberg News quoted the Adani group chairman as saying, "Succession is very, very important for the business sustainability... I left the choice to the second generation as the transition must be organic, gradual and very systematic." The report identified his sons, Karan (37) and Jeet (26), and their cousins, Pranav (45) and Sagar (30), as the possible successors.

When Gautam Adani retires, his four heirs will become equal beneficiaries of the family trust which along with eight overseas entities and a domestically incorporated company control Adani Enterprises, the Bloomberg News report said. In the stock exchange filing, Adani Enterprises did not put any date for the succession or retire-



ment. "Further, Mr Adani has been misquoted about heirs and equal beneficial interest in the family trust," it said.

Adani started off as a commodity trader in 1988 and expanded rapidly into ports, airports, roads, power, renewable energy, power transmission, gas distribution, real estate, FMCG, cement, data centres and media business. The stunning share price rises of Adani's listed companies helped propel him to become India's richest and briefly the world's second-richest person in September 2022. This was before US short seller Hindenburg Research accused the conglomerate of "the largest con in corporate history" and using a web of companies in tax havens to inflate its revenue and manipulate stock prices, even as debt burden rose. While the group repeatedly denied all allegations, the report sent group stock down to as much as USD 150 billion in value at one point. Most companies have recouped the losses but Adani has not been able to reclaim the richest Indian tag on a sustained basis. With a net worth of USD 103 billion, he is ranked at No.12 behind fellow Gujarati billionaire Mukesh Ambani on the global rich list.

RBI to create repository of lending apps



The Reserve Bank of India has decided to create a public repository of digital lending apps (DLAs) deployed by the regulated entities (REs) in order to aid the customers in verifying the claim of DLAs' association with regulated entities like banks and avoid illegal apps. The repository will be based on data submitted by the REs (without any intervention by the RBI) directly to the repository and will get updated as and when the REs report the details — addition of new DLAs or deletion of any existing DLA. This data will be available on the RBI's website, it said. The repository will enable borrowers in identifying whether the lending app is illegal or legal.

The RBI issued guidelines on digital lending addressing protection of customers interest, data privacy, concerns on interest rates and recovery practices and mis-selling on September 2, 2022. However, media reports have highlighted continued presence of unscrupu-

ous players in digital lending who falsely claim their association with RBI regulated entities (REs). As per the findings of an RBI Working Group, as many as 600 out of 1100 lending apps available for Indian Android users across 80 application stores are illegal apps. And as the number of lending apps grows, this trend would spike, since a user downloading a lending app cannot identify if the app is legitimate or not.

It is also likely that several copycat apps and websites will mushroom across the internet. The working group set up by the RBI had proposed stringent norms for digital lenders, including a separate legislation to prevent illegal digital lending activities. Over the last five years, thousands of people have fallen prey to predatory loan apps in the absence of any regulations, even suffered sexual harassment and ended up giving extortion money to loan recovery agents. In September 2022, the RBI came out with guidelines on digital lending aimed at protecting customers from unethical business practices, such as mis-selling, breach of data privacy, unfair business conduct, charging of exorbitant interest rates, adopted by digital lenders. The RBI asked the regulated entities to ensure that Lending Service Providers (LSPs) and DLAs comply with the guidelines. As per the guidelines, the regulated entities will have to disclose upfront the rate charged to the borrower of a digital loan, ensure that borrowers are aware of the products at the time of on-boarding and capture the economic profile of the borrowers before offering the loans.

Clearing time for cheques to be cut from 2 days to few hours

Mumbai: The RBI aims to reduce the clearing time required for bank cheques to a few hours as part of a major step to facilitate the ease of doing business in the country, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said on Thursday.

At present, cheque clearing through the Cheque Truncation System (CTS) operates in a batch processing mode and has a clearing cycle of up to two working days. It is proposed to reduce the clearing cycle by introducing continuous clearing with 'on-realisation-settlement' in CTS, Das explained. "This means that cheques will be cleared within a few hours on the day of presentation. This will speed up cheque payments and benefit both the payer and the payee," the RBI chief added. Cheque truncation entails the process of replacing the flow of the physical cheque issued by a drawer from the presenting

bank to the paying bank branch. Instead of the physical cheque being sent, an electronic image of the cheque is transmitted to the paying branch through the clearing house, which conveys the relevant information such as the MICR band, date of presentation and the presenting bank. Cheque truncation thus obviates the need to move the physical instruments across bank branches, other than in exceptional circumstances for clearing purposes. This effectively eliminates the associated cost of movement of the physical cheques, reduces the time required for their collection and expedites cheque processing. CTS enables quick and cheap realisation of funds to customers as compared to traditional methods that entail physical movement. Under grid-based CTS clearing, all cheques drawn on bank branches falling within the jurisdiction of the grid are treated and cleared as local cheques.

'At first, my motivation was to cook or travel, now it's about exploring different cultures and people': Chef Virgilio Martinez



Back when chefs didn't enjoy the reputation and fame that grace them today, young Virgilio Martinez — now a well-known name in the culinary world with multiple awards in his basket — had a dream: to put Peruvian cuisine on the world map. It was an unexpected choice, considering he had already secured a seat at the state university to pursue law. It was almost unacceptable for his lawyer father, who saw him following in his footsteps and carrying forward the legacy. "Back then, there weren't any culinary schools in Peru. Peruvian cuisine didn't have any validation in the world. Telling your parents that you wanted to be a Peruvian chef was akin to telling them that you wanted to clean toilets. It wasn't considered a meaningful profession that could bring you any success," he told The Indian Express.

As evident, his father's disapproval didn't stop him. Chef Martinez also credits his mother, an artist by profession, who understood that cooking was his way to express art and played an instrumental role in shaping him. "Growing up, I was all over the place and had issues being stable or focused. My mother noticed this and pushed me to paint, work with ceramics and engage with art," he said, adding that aesthetics play a very important role in his work. "Before I plate the food, I look for a specific ceramic or plate. And, if I can't find it, I will get it made. Sometimes, we have to wait for the plates to come, but it is decided by us," he added. During his maiden visit to India at the end of May, facilitated by Culinary Culture and Masters of Marriott Bonvoy in partnership with American Express, Chef Martinez hosted two dinners at Koishii, The St. Regis Mumbai. Priced at a whopping Rs 50,000 per person, he brought a taste of Central, his flagship restaurant that earned the coveted number one spot on The World's 50 Best Restaurants List 2023, to the Maximum City. The diners were served an eight-course menu, featuring ingredients as intriguing as codium (a marine green algae), macambo (a nutrient dense superfood consumed by indigenous communities of Amazon rainforest), olluco (a root vegetable native to the Andean regions of South America) and Copoazú (a tropical fruit native to Amazon), among others.

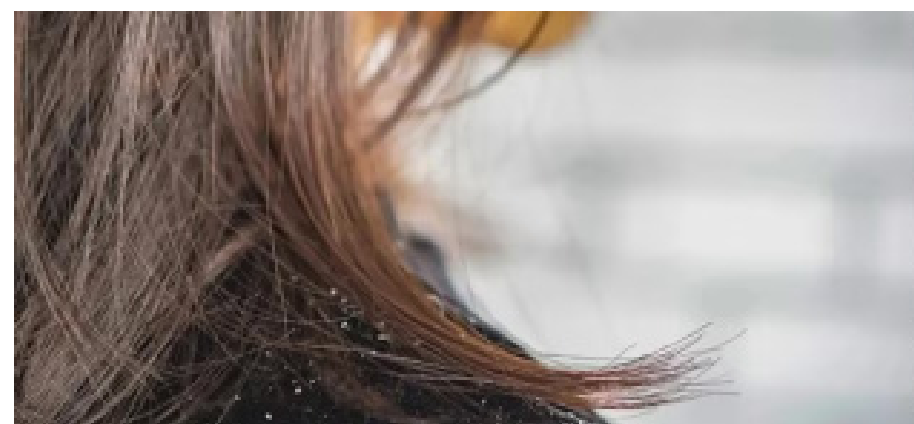
In July, Chef Martinez returned to Mumbai, as part of chef consortium, to curate an all-vegetarian menu for the wedding of Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant. A photo of the menu, which went viral on social media, featured eight unique dishes created by him and his team. The menu included options like "Avocado emulsion and Peruvian corn," "Cashew roll with mountain chimichurri and fresh cheese," "Extreme altitude seeds with smoked tomato," and "Dates & lentil triangles with pistachio tiger's milk." When asked about the awards and their relevance, he quickly shared that his plan wasn't to be number one

or appear on magazine covers or television, adding that it would be shallow "because then there won't be anything to do once you reach there," he says. "I was dreaming of having a restaurant where I was able to cook for people and make my guests happy," he shared, adding that in a restaurant, one can express multiple things. "Of course we want to please our guests, but we also strive to create new ideas, philosophy, a culture of cooking, and to represent our country and the whole continent." But how does one find the motivation to continue going on and on? "With time, I started to develop new motivations. At the beginning, my motivation was to cook or travel. Now it has gone beyond that; it is about getting to know different cultures, people, and of course, representing my country. We need motivation and creativity every single day because I need a reason to wake up and be creative." Going forward, he plans to have "a museum inside Central showing our work." At a meet-and-greet session held at Koishii, food writers and chefs interacted with Martinez and watched his Netflix documentary "Virgilio" (not available in Asia), which offered insight into his life and the food philosophy he employs at Central. The restaurant, known for its contemporary interpretation of Peruvian cuisine, also serves as his research centre where he examines and integrates indigenous ingredients into his menu. Guided by the philosophy of "cooking ecosystems," the restaurant also has a research arm, Mater Iniciativa.

"We have noticed with our research that in Peru, we can cook at different altitudes. So we conceptualised a menu featuring a variety of dishes that come from different altitudes and ecosystems, highlighting the biodiversity of the region," he explained, adding that diners in India experienced "Peruvian nature and American biodiversity coupled with some other dishes prepared using ingredients that we found in India — we are amazed by the way you use lentils." Drawing a comparison between India and Peru, Chef Martinez, who also visited the spice market in Mumbai, noted that both countries take pride in their ingredients and flavours. "I am surprised by the diversity of ingredients that you have and the strong sense of food culture that's visible on the street. Yes, it is noisy because a lot of information is being exchanged, but in the end, you see this balance of harmony, which isn't seen in many places around the world," he said. When asked what took him so long to visit, he explained that he wasn't ready or mature enough to see India the way he did during this trip. "We have to cook, which brings along its share of stress that we are used to, but then I wouldn't have been able to see the city, its people, culture, and ingredients," he said, adding, "I can't wait to come again and stay for over two weeks to truly explore India's many regional cuisines."

TV host Paras Tomar vouches for this home remedy to 'remove dandruff in 7 days'; expert says, 'not validated by enough evidence'

Dandruff — caused by multiple factors like sweat, using chemical-based shampoos, and exposure to dirt and dust — is a common problem that can be embarrassing and frustrating in equal measure. As such, those facing the issue are always looking for instant solutions. So, when we spotted actor, TV host, and content creator Paras Tomar's post stating that combining water, cinnamon powder, and apple cider vinegar to make a spray is a potent solution, we wanted to know its effectiveness. In 1 glass of water, add cinnamon powder and apple cider vinegar, shared Tomar, stating that apple cider vinegar will balance the pH level of the scalp which will help reduce the flakiness. "Cinnamon is known for invigoration and hair growth. Blood circulation helps improve dryness, which reduces dandruff. The spray applied over seven days (overnight) will also improve the hair texture,"



claimed Tomar. But what do experts have to say?

While it is believed that apple cider vinegar helps reduce dandruff, and itchy scalp and promotes hair growth, Dr Rinky Kapoor, consultant dermatologist, cosmetic dermatologist, and dermatologist, The Esthetic Clinics, said it is important to understand how these ingredients individually work. "The acid content in apple cider vinegar is known to balance out the scalp's pH level which further stops

the formation of dandruff due to its antimicrobial and antioxidant properties. Moreover, cinnamon is a natural remedy to remove dandruff due to its anti-fungal properties that help to deal with dandruff-causing fungi Malassezia and is believed to prevent breakage and promote hair growth," said Dr Kapoor. However, it is "not validated by enough evidence", stressed Dr Kapoor. "There is no scientific research backing up the idea of directly apply-

ing apple cider vinegar on the scalp. Excessive use of cinnamon on hair can cause scalp irritation, burning sensation, itchiness, and redness. The ACV has a pungent smell and can lead to stinky hair," said Dr Shareefa Chause, dermatologist and cosmetologist, Shareefa's Skin Care Clinic. Experts urge that it is essential to understand that ingredients like cinnamon and apple cider vinegar are not suitable for everyone and should not be used without expert advice.

Sobhita Dhulipala and Naga Chaitanya engagement: Why did the couple choose date '8.8.8?' What is its significance?



Putting speculations to rest, veteran actor, Nagarjuna Akkineni, on Thursday, took to his X (Twitter handle) to announce the engagement of his son and actor, Naga Chaitanya and Sobhita Dhulipala. For weeks, speculations were rife that the couple was all set to make things official soon, so when the Chandralekha actor finally shared the news and first photos from Chay and Sobhita's special day on X, their fans and social media weren't surprised.

Sharing radiant photos from the ceremony, Nagarjuna wrote, "We are delighted to announce the engagement of our son, Naga Chaitanya, to Sobhita Dhulipala, which took place this morning at 9:42 a.m. We are overjoyed to welcome her into our family. Congratulations to the happy couple! Wishing them a lifetime of love and happiness. God bless!" "8.8.8. A beginning of infinite love" read his post. This caught everyone's attention as the mention of '8.8.8' instead of 8.8.2024 with many wondering why the couple chose this specific date to put a ring on their relationship. Chances are you have already scrolled through a dozen Reels talking about the significance of the day, Aug 8, 2024, on Instagram. According to astrologists and numerologists, 8.8.8 (the eighth day of August and 2024 is a multiple of 8), August 8 is the day of great significance in numerology and astrology, calling it a powerful "celestial event" when Lion's Gate Portal opens and is considered a great day for manifestation. It is said that the day has an energetic influence on individuals and is a perfect opportunity for spiritual awakening.

Dr Neeti Kaushik, motivational speaker who speaks

on spirituality, on her YouTube Channel, explained that the Lion's Gate Portal marks a time when the Earth aligns with the star Sirius, creating a cosmic alignment that allows for heightened spiritual energy and transformation. "Sirius is the brightest star in the sky. This event is deeply rooted in numerology, astrology, and ancient wisdom, offering a unique opportunity for personal growth and ascension." Sobhita and Chay's engagement ceremony was attended by close family and friends. The actor was previously married to Samantha Ruth Prabhu but their marriage ended in 2021. His love story with Sobhita only began post their separation. According to an official statement, the couple got engaged at the Custody actor's residence in Hyderabad. "Naga Chaitanya was previously married to actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu. Their divorce came through on 2nd October 2021. The newly engaged couple met a few months after Naga's divorce from Samantha. Around May, Naga and Sobhita were first spotted together in Hyderabad, Naga's hometown where Sobhita was promoting her film, Major. Reports suggested that the actress who was in the city for film promotions, celebrated her birthday along with Naga and some friends. That's when they clicked, their friendship got thicker and they started dating each other. The couple has been dating ever since. In fact, they have been spotted abroad as well, spending quality time with each other in the company of their friends. Putting an end to all the speculations, Naga and Sobhita have gotten engaged today in a traditional ceremony blessed by their families. We wish the couple the best in their journey together," read the statement.

Prashanth on Andhagan: 'My script choices have never been wrong and my passion never waned'

The first interaction sets the tone for any interview. If you are the one asking the questions, then the first question of an interview isn't an excuse to showboat, but more about making the guest comfortable. Probably why the first thing I discussed with Prashanth, ahead of the release of the much-delayed yet much-awaited Andhagan, was about a series of social media posts he made almost a decade back. It wasn't exactly the best phase in his career, and his films were either getting delayed, not released, or not working at the box-office. But between all of this, Prashanth used to send birthday and festive wishes to the people in his 'friends' list on Facebook. No prizes for guessing who found his place there by sheer luck. When it was brought to his notice that for a lost youngster, staying away from home, and at an important crossroad of his life, his wishes made a lot of difference, Prashanth says, "Thank you for sharing your story with me. It is such instances that make us feel we are doing something right in this world." However, over the years, this habit of being super active on social media lead to incessant trolling. But Prashanth shares that he finds the entire uproar quite funny. "Since when did wishing someone become wrong? Isn't that a basic courtesy we can extend to each other," reasons the actor, who is currently basking in the incessant love he is receiving from people during the promotional overdrive for Andhagan. "I will forever be grateful for all the love. I have always been blessed with this affection from my fans, and it is heartwarming to see it grow manifold over time."

For people unaware of the versatility of Prashanth, fondly called the Top Star, a look at his filmography might give a clear picture. The actor dabbled in multiple genres, and it was rare to see him repeat a role or a premise in his consecutive films. "The script is always the hero in my films. I have always tried to stretch the boundaries, and attempt new genres. And in many ways, my films were pioneers. Take, for instance, Shock. It was the first pure horror film fronted by a star in quite a few years. Then, Ponnar Shankar, which was shot over four years, was one of the first star-studded historicals in a really long time. Adaikalam, a very beautiful film about parenting and growing up, didn't feature a heroine track at all. I didn't mind going on such paths that weren't usually taken by our stars. I can assure you that my script choices were never wrong, and my passion for cinema never waned. But there were other factors that didn't come together," points out Prashanth, who believes everything has finally come together for Andhagan.

Andhagan, the official remake of Sriram Raghavan's Andhadhun, has Prashanth stepping into the shoes of Ayushmann Khurrana. As a trained pianist himself, Prashanth believes Andhagan will feel more authentic due to this facet of his skills. "Knowing how to play the piano ensured that my concentration was only on performing well. I didn't have to think whether I was playing the piano right, because I knew I was doing it right. The real twist was to play it as someone who is blind," says the GOAT actor, revealing that taking up such a character instilled a better appreciation for the lives lead by the visually challenged. "I have the highest regards for them, and the way they face these challenges with a smile on their faces helped me understand life a little better."

The film marks actor-filmmaker Thiagarajan's fifth directorial venture with Prashanth. They have worked to-



However, over the years, this habit of being super active on social media lead to incessant trolling. But Prashanth shares that he finds the entire uproar quite funny. "Since when did wishing someone become wrong? Isn't that a basic courtesy we can extend to each other," reasons the actor, who is currently basking in the incessant love he is receiving from people during the promotional overdrive for Andhagan.

gether in a horror film (Shock), a historical (Ponnar Shankar), a comedy (Aanazhagan), a vigilante film (Mambattiyaan), and now, a crime thriller/dark comedy. "What can I say except that I am blessed with a director who knows my plus points. Working under his tutelage, I learn something everyday as an actor. I'm awestruck by his ability to keep up with the latest trends and being updated about the sense and sensibilities of today's cinema," says Prashanth, who is quick to add that there is no special treatment because he is the director's son. "He treats every actor with a lot of dignity. They feel nurtured by him, and he instills a sense of discipline even when making all of us comfortable. He is very humble, and doesn't pull ranks. There is a sense of transparency in his direction style that allows people to give him constructive feedback," says a proud Prashanth, who believes this aspect of his father makes him all the more endearing.

Happy that it was pointed out that he never hogged the spotlight in his films, which were always filled with top actors playing important roles, Prashanth ascribes it to feeling secure as an actor. "I am confident in what I do, and I know my path, and what I want to achieve. I have always supported new talents because it is important to nurture an atmosphere that will allow all of us to grow together. As an actor, I like everyone in a scene to have equal space if the script demands. It is always the movie that counts," says a confident Prashanth, who has been winning hearts from what has been seen and known from Vijay's GOAT so far. "It is time to give back to the fans who have stood by me through everything. Andhagan, GOAT, and whatever I am going to do next is to give fans the Prashanth they always wanted to see. The Prashanth who could dance, do a lot of stunt sequences, and of course, champion films that have intriguing subjects," signs off the actor, but not before once again thanking yours truly for sharing my story with him. "It's all about being there for each other, right?" Yes, it is.

Vicky Kaushal's go-to person for advice on scripts is his dad Sham Kaushal followed by wife Katrina Kaif: 'Dad is updated with box office...'

Vicky Kaushal, who is currently enjoying the success of his film Bad Newz, doesn't need to look far when it comes to seeking career advice. For the unversed, the 36-year-old, who is married to actor Katrina Kaif, is the son of renowned action director Sham Kaushal. Vicky's younger brother Sunny Kaushal is also an actor. So naturally, films, scripts and box office numbers are a regular dinner table conversation in the Kaushal household. The actor in a recent interview revealed that for both script and box-office-related opinions, he can bank on his father Sham.

"If it is script-related, I will first go to my dad and then Katrina," he told Bollywood Hungama. The Uri actor further revealed that the veteran action director has a deep interest in film trade and box-office numbers and likes to keep himself abreast with money the films are making, especially, Vicky's. "After the film's release, I go to my dad because he understands trade and box office. He is updated about which film is earning how much money at the box office. Sometimes, he would tell me, 'Dekho itna hua,' and I would go like, 'Acha itna kariya?'" he shared. While Sham enjoys keeping a track of box office num-



bers of all films, he looks at the numbers Vicky's films are making very minutely. "He would know when a single ticket also gets sold," shared Vicky. The Sardar Uddham actor is currently gearing up for the release of his film Chhava, based on the life of Maratha warrior Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj. Vicky Kaushal's recent release Bad Newz, also starring Tripti Dimri and Ammy Virk in the lead role, has so far earned Rs 61.48 crore at the domestic box office.

Alka Yagnik almost declined to sing Taal's title track; recalls waiting till 2 am for AR Rahman to arrive: 'Mosquitoes were biting us'

Subhash Ghai's Taal is celebrating its 25th anniversary on August 13, marking a significant milestone in Hindi cinema. The film, renowned for its soulful soundtrack composed by AR Rahman, featured Alka Yagnik singing the title track. Reflecting on her experience working with Rahman, Alka shared how she nearly declined the opportunity to record the song.

In an interview with O2India, Alka revealed her initial reluctance to travel to Chennai for the recording session due to prior commitments in Mumbai. She recounted, "I told Subhash ji that I can't do the song because I had committed to other songs in Mumbai. He insisted that I had to go. I told him I didn't want to stay up all night. He said, 'You are going to miss something if you don't sing this song.' While I was pondering this, my mother asked about my conversation with Subhash ji. When I told her, she insisted that I go to Chennai to record the song since it was Subhash ji's film and Rahman was composing it. So, I went to Chennai grudgingly." Alka also shared her experience waiting for Rahman, who typically worked late into the night. "I was called to the studio at 9 pm, but Rahman and the team did not arrive until after 2 am. Subhash ji and I waited outside on a swing, and mosquitoes were biting us. I told him, 'Looks like I'll have to swing the whole night.' Subhash ji asked me to hang on. Rahman arrived after 2 am and he looked very fresh, as



if he had just woken up." She added, "My biggest problem was working nights, while Rahman's was working during the day." Despite her initial discomfort, Alka Yagnik came to appreciate AR Rahman's nocturnal working hours. "We finished the song by 4 in the morning. By then, I realised why Rahman prefers working at night. It was the best time to work on a song because there was no disturbance, no one walking in. It was peaceful and quiet. Just the three of us were there," she said.

Taal, which starred Aishwarya Rai, Akshaye Khanna, and Anil Kapoor, was a major commercial success both domestically and overseas.

Shah Rukh Khan had disagreements with Subhash Ghai, Mahima Chaudhary accused him of 'bullying' her

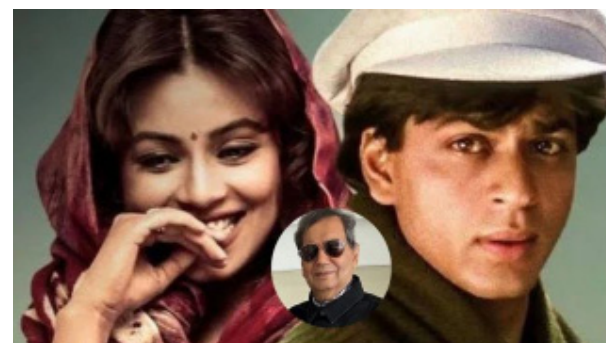
On Thursday, Subhash Ghai shared a poster from his film Pardes on his Instagram handle, claiming actress Mahima Chaudhary sent it to him. He wrote, "Isn't rewarding to get a message from your protegee with this picture celebrating 27 years of Pardes." He added, "Thank you dear Mahima for your sweet message today as it 'feels like yesterday.'" Calling Mahima a "fresh talent", Subhash said, "Yes, it was a big challenge to make a film with fresh talent with an established star like SRK with his super performance. You were blessed with Filmfare award for your great performance and the movie ran for 60 weeks."

Ghai claimed the film still resonates with people. Pardes marked the debut of actors Mahima Chaudhary and Apurva Agnihotri. However, they were not the first choice of the team. In an earlier interview with indianexpress.com, the filmmaker revealed, "There was immense pressure. My last film hadn't worked so, distributors suggested that if I cast Salman and Madhuri alongside Shah Rukh, it would give a huge boost to the film. Both were stars. But I refused, simply because they would not have done justice to my characters. Rajiv was an NRI, so there needed to be a certain mystery about him. It had to be someone unknown and hence I decided to cast a newcomer. That's how we chose Apurva." "For Ganga, they wanted Madhuri, who had worked with us many films. She was, in fact, a Mukta Arts heroine. Madhuri had even liked the script and wanted to do it but I knew the character of Ganga demanded a non-familiar face, an innocence never seen before. An established face wouldn't have given me that. That's how Mahima happened, and I am glad both of my choices paid off", he added.

In the interview, he also recalled his differences with Shah Rukh Khan and revealed the actor was quite unhappy with his character and feared the film would damage his romantic-hero image. "I told him, 'You can't do your signature romance, your character is in denial till the end and you have to play it like that.' He would say, 'Subhashji, I am not happy, I am doing a non-romantic role.'" They also had arguments over SRK's costumes for the film. Similarly, there was quite a controversy between Mahima and the filmmaker after the movie released. The actress in an interview with Bollywood Hungama claimed, "I was bullied by Mr. Subhash Ghai. He even took me to the court and wanted me to cancel my first show. It was quite stressful. He sent a message to all the producers that nobody should work with me! If you pick up one of the issues of Trade Guide magazine in 1998 or 1999, there was an ad that he had given which stated that if anybody wanted to work with me, that person would have to contact him."

Later, Subhash Ghai reacted to the same and gave a statement that read, "I am amused reading this news. Mahima and I are very good friends till date and are still in touch through messages."

He added, "Yes, there was a small conflict in 1997 post the release of Pardes, which became a big blockbuster and for which she even got the filmfare award for



best actor. My company did send her a show cause notice for flouting a clause in our agreement. Media industry reacted in a big way and so I withdrew and canceled her contract with Mukta. After 3 years she came to me with her family n apologised for her impulsive reaction. I forgave her n thereafter we became friends again." Despite opening to mixed reviews, the film went on to become the fourth highest-grossing Bollywood film of 1997 after Dil To Pagal Hai, Border, and Ishq. The film's songs also became a great hit with the audience. Pardes was later remade in Telugu as Pelli Kanuka starring Jagapati Babu, Lakshmi and Banumathi Ramakrishan. The film released on the eve of celebration of 50th anniversary of the Indian independence in 1998. Pelli Kanuka marked the last appearance of Bhanumathi as an actor.

"This time the character is darker, edgier" in 'Phir Aayi Hasseen Dillruba': Taapsee Pannu:

New Delhi: Actor Taapsee Pannu, who is gearing up for the release of her upcoming film 'Phir Aayi Hasseen Dillruba', talked about her character Rani and how challenging it was to make it intriguing for the audience again.

Taapsee's depiction of Rani in 'Hasseen Dillruba' remains a stunning and compelling performance. As the actor is reprising her role in its sequel, she shared that it is going to be more intense and darker. While speaking to the media, she said, "The most difficult aspect was to fulfill the expectations of the audience. Apart from that, performance-wise, it was not that challenging, as after doing the first part, I knew what the audience liked about the character and what not. So, this time I got a chance for the correction. I approached Part Two ('Phir Aayi Hasseen Dillruba') with more confidence than I did with Part One (Hasseen Dillruba). I hope the audience feels the same way. This time the character is darker, and edgier and the stakes are high." e high."

Vikrant Massey, who played Rishu in 'Hasseen Dillruba', talked about reprising his role and what the audience can expect from his character this time.

Neeraj Chopra's mother gives gold standard response: 'Arshad Nadeem is also like my child'



GNS News Agency, August 10

Neeraj Chopra mother, Arshad Nadeem Saroj Devi, mother of athlete Neeraj Chopra, speaks; Silver medalist India's Neeraj Chopra and Gold medalist Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem greet each other after the men's javelin throw final at the 2024 Summer Olympics. Neeraj Chopra's mother, Saroj Devi says his son's silver is like a gold and also lauded gold medal winner Arshad Nadeem of Pakistan. "I am happy with the silver, the guy who got gold (Arshad Nadeem) is also my child, everyone goes there after doing a lot of hard work," she said.

Arshad Nadeem of Pakistan and defending champion Neeraj Chopra of India finished 1-2 at the Paris Olympics on Thursday, fans from the subcontinent were in abundance at the Stade de France. Nadeem set a new Olympic record with a throw of 92.97 meters (305 feet) in his second attempt, smashing the old mark of 90.57 set by Andreas Thorkildsen of Norway in 2008.

Arshad Nadeem wins Pakistan's 1st Olympics medal in 32 years: Who is javelin thrower who edged past Neeraj Chopra

GNS News Agency, August 10

India's star athlete Neeraj Chopra added another Olympic medal to the country's — and his own — tally after securing a silver in the men's javelin throw final at the Paris Olympics on Thursday. While the Olympic champion from Tokyo was chasing a repeat gold, a formidable challenge emerged in the form of Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem, who clinched the top spot with a record-breaking performance. It was a historic moment for Pakistani sports. The 27-year-old Arshad Nadeem not only secured the top spot but also shattered the Olympic record with a monumental throw of 92.97 meters.

Arshad Nadeem's triumph marks Pakistan's first-ever individual gold medal at the Olympics. Their men's hockey team had won three golds in the past. But the last of these golds came in Los Angeles 1984, 40 years ago! This is also Pakistan's first medal at the Olympics in 32 years. Arshad Nadeem of Pakistan celebrates winning gold and setting a new Olympic record. Arshad Nadeem's gold is also Pakistan's first-ever track and field medal at the Olympics. His exceptional performance on Thursday included three of the four best throws of the night. Arshad Nadeem also became only the fourth athlete to cross the 90m mark in the men's javelin throw event at the Olympic Games. He broke the Olympics record with his gold winning throw of 92.97m. But it must be noted that Arshad Nadeem registered two throws that went past the previous Olympic record of 90.57 meters, held by Norway's Andreas Thorkildsen since the Beijing Games (his second best throw on the night was a monster 91.79 metres throw with his final attempt). The journey to Olympic gold for javelin sensation Arshad Nadeem was paved with sacrifice and determination. His father, a humble mason, toiled tirelessly to provide for his family, including ensuring Arshad received essential nutrients like milk and ghee for his development. Arshad father (left) Arshad Nadeem with his parents at his village Mian Chahu in Pakistan's Punjab province; Arshad Nadeem celebrates after his second attempt during the men's javelin throw final. (Special Arrangement | PTI) Despite earning a meager Pakistani Rupees 400-500 a day, Arshad's father prioritized his son's well-being, recognizing his potential. Nadeem's father aspired for his son to lead a life far removed from the hardships of manual labor. "I did not want him to work like me," Arshad Nadeem's father Muhammad Ashraf had told The Indian Express' Nitin Sharma in 2022. How Arshad Nadeem started playing sport Arshad Nadeem taking up javelin had a lot to do with his father's passion for Pakistan's very popular rural sport Nezebazi — tent pegging. Like most men in their town, Ashraf, after a tiring day's work, would head to the ground to watch horsemen show their daredevilry. His son too would accompany him. On his father's insistence, Arshad Nadeem would take up Nezebazi and would train every day. This would make the young boy a regular at the town's sprawling grounds and expose him to different outdoor sports. Just before Arshad Nadeem claimed gold at the Paris Olympics, his father told The Indian Express's Nitin Sharma, "Around 2010, Arshad asked me to bring a cricket bat and ball for him." It was at the village ground that a young Arshad Nadeem would start playing cricket before he was persuaded into athletics by two of his brothers. Arshad Nadeem would try his hand at shot put, discus throw as well hammer throw and long jump at the village school. A young Arshad with his coach Syed Hussain Bukhari in 2016 A young Arshad Nadeem with his coach Syed Hussain Bukhari in 2016.

Arshad Nadeem would also switch to playing tape-ball cricket but it was a school athletics event where the tall youngster's javelin throw talent was identified. Under coach Rasheed Ahmad Saqi that Arshad Nadeem would train to throw the spear.

Arshad Nadeem's recent struggles to get a javelin Earlier this year, Arshad Nadeem, who had finished second behind Neeraj Chopra at the Budapest World Championships, was quoted by the Pakistani media as saying that he had been struggling to get an international standard javelin for many years and had been using the same one for the "past seven to eight years." "It has now got to a stage where my javelin is damaged and I have asked the national federation and my coach to do something about it before the Paris Olympics. When I started off in 2015, competing in international events I got this javelin ... for an international athlete aiming to win a medal in the Olympic Games, you need proper equip-

Festive offer Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem and India's Neeraj Chopra celebrate after their respective second attempts during the men's javelin throw final at the 2024 Summer Olympics, in Paris, France. Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem and India's Neeraj Chopra celebrate after their respective second attempts during the men's javelin throw final at the 2024 Summer Olympics, in Paris, France. (AP | PTI) Chopra took silver at 89.45 meters, a season best, and Anderson Peters of Grenada took the bronze at 88.54. Neeraj's father Satish also praised Nadeem for his performance. He said: "Everyone has its day and today it was Arshad's day. Twelve players were competing and Arshad won the gold. Man congratulations to him." Neeraj's father also revealed that the groin injury has affected his son in the final.

India's Neeraj Chopra during the men's javelin throw final at the 2024 Summer Olympics, in Paris. India's Neeraj Chopra during the men's javelin throw final at the 2024 Summer Olympics, in Paris. Chopra fouled on all five of his other throws and said he's been in a funk the last few years. "I'm always injured," said Chopra, who has been slowed by a groin injury. "Nadeem threw really well. Congratulations to him and his country." It was the first ever gold medal in track and field for Pakistan which, along with India, can contend for gold in cricket four years from now when that sport joins the Olympic program in Los Angeles. "There's no doubt about the cricket rivalry. Now this javelin is also there," Nadeem said through a translator. "People back home in Pakistan and even in India, they were eager to see us both throwing the javelin and beating each other. I'm happy to see Chopra earning silver."



ment and training facilities," Arshad Nadeem had reportedly said. Reacting to this, Neeraj Chopra had told SAI Media: "It can't be that Arshad Nadeem doesn't have the means to buy a javelin. He is a champion and must be doing some brand endorsements. I reckon he has earned a bit of money too. But having said that, his government can look at Arshad Nadeem's needs and support him just like how our government is doing. Additionally, Arshad Nadeem is a top javelin thrower and I believe that the javelin makers will be more than happy to sponsor him and provide what he wants. This is a piece of advice from my side," said Neeraj Chopra. Arshad Nadeem vs Neeraj Chopra The Paris Olympics final is the first time in 10 competitions where Neeraj Chopra and Arshad Nadeem have competed, that the Pakistani javelin thrower has finished ahead of the Indian. At the Tokyo Olympics, where Neeraj Chopra had claimed gold, Arshad Nadeem had ended up fifth. Here's a table of their head-to-head records: Neeraj Chopra vs Arshad Nadeem: Personal best throws

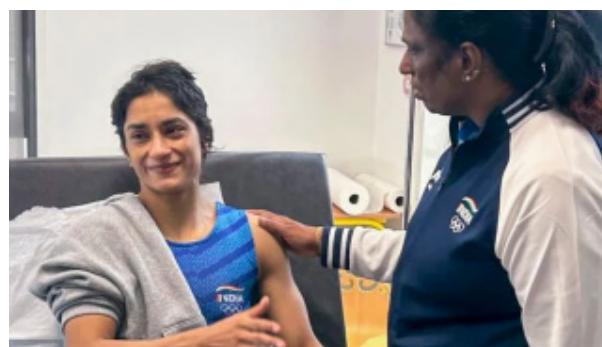
MP Colts score easy victory over Ensonse

GNS News Agency, August 10

Hyderabad: MP Colts secured a ten-wicket win over Ensonse on day three of the Elite A match of the HCA A1 Div 3 Days Leagues Championship in Hyderabad on Thursday. MP Colts finished at 74 for no loss to emerge winners. Earlier, MP Colts took a 154-run lead in the first innings. In second innings, Ensonse's B Rahul smashed 81-ball 101 (5x4, 4x6) as his side posted 226/4 in 28 overs. In the other match, Thakur Yogeshwar Singh's remarkable figures of 6/29 propels Medak to a convincing 117-run win against Classic in the Plate C match. Yogeshwar's impressive show led his team to bundle out Classic for a mere 92.

Brief Scores: Elite A: Jai Hanuman 309 in 68.1 overs drew with Deccan Chronicle 306 in 86.3 overs (Vaishnav Reddy 84, Debansu Rayaguru 97, Mudassar 6/69), Ensonse 275 in 83 overs & 226/4 in 28 overs (B Rahul 101, Abhyudaya Pratap 68) lost to MP Colts 429 in 88.3 overs & 74/0 in 12.1 overs (MSR Charan 36, S Vaishnav Reddy 35), UBI 127/8 in 25 overs (K Krithik Reddy 55) drew with AOC 84 in 20.3 overs (Aliga 3/19, Amol Shinde 4/17); Elite B: Evergreen 417/6 in 90 overs & 176/2 in 34 overs (Nitesh Reddy 48) drew with Combined Dist 64/10 in 30.2 overs; Plate C: Medak 206 in 48 overs & 162/10 in 44.2 overs (Deekshith 31, Urvesh 4/10) bt Classic 159 in 51.5 overs & 92 in 41 overs (P Hemavardhan 38, Thakur Yogeshwar Singh 6/26); Team Speed 193 in 59.5 overs & 130 in 32.4 overs (Anirudh Kapil 33, T Harish 3/30) lost to Deccan Wanderers 160 in 47.4 overs & 164/3 in 31.5 overs (Harshith Choudhary 68, Aawez Ahmed 57); Hyd Blues 197/10 in 55.4 overs & 114/1 in 25 overs (R Ram 58, R Sharan 30) drew with Rohit XI 279/5 in 72 overs; Apex 168 in 65.1 overs drew with Sportive 187/8 dec in 58.2 overs (Liakhath Hussain 100, CSP Karthikeya Choudhary 36, Akshat 4/28); HCA A2 Div 2 Days Leagues Championship: Warangal Dist 337/9 in 80 overs (S Anruth Kumar 129, G Pavan 95, Amarender 4/43) vs Megacity; Imperial 183/6 in 55 overs (Guru Vidwan J4) vs Secbad Nawabs; Young Citizen 96 in 41.5 overs (K Koushik 4/22) vs Southend Raymonds 13/1 in 6 overs; Charminar 260/1 in 48 overs (Wafi Kachchi 143 batting, Harshvardhan Reddy 61 batting) vs Marredpally CC; Vijay Hanuman 232 in 71.4 overs (C Lehar 104, Tushar Tripathi 3/42) vs National 14/2 in 9 overs; Shalimar CC 177 in 47 overs (MD Nadeem 64, Charan 3/48) vs New Blues.

Courage shattered... don't have any more strength: Vinesh Phogat retires



GNS News Agency, August 10

Vinesh Phogat Indian Olympics Association President PT Usha meets wrestler Vinesh Phogat after the latter was hospitalised following her disqualification from the Paris Olympics as she was found overweight ahead of her women's 50kg final match, in Paris. Vinesh Phogat went to sleep desolate, letting the world know that she'd hung up her wrestling boots with a short middle-of-the-night announcement on social media. "Ma, kushtee mere se jeet gayi, main haar gayi. Maaf karna, aapka sapna, meri himmat sab toot chukein. Isse zyada taqat nahi rahi ab. Alvida kushtee 2001-2024 (Ma, wrestling has won, I have lost. Please forgive me, your dreams and my courage, everything is shattered. I don't have any more strength now. Goodbye wrestling 2001-2024)," Phogat said in a post on X, adding that she would always be indebted to all.

When she woke up, the wrestler had a surprise visitor: Abhinav Bindra. "I had to meet her because she is my hero," Bindra, independent India's first individual gold medalist at the Olympics, Phogat was one win away from joining Bindra in the exclusive club of India's individual gold medalists — Neeraj Chopra is the only other member. On the morning of her Olympic final on Wednesday,

however, she could not meet the weight criteria and was disqualified for being 100 grams overweight. Her day of triumph turned into torment. Bindra reached the Athletes' Village with a bouquet and a message, and extracted a smile out of her — the first time she smiled "dil se" (from the heart), one of Phogat's team members said. Dear Vinesh, It is said that sport is a celebration of human will. I have known that to be true many times in my career but never has it resonated more than today. As I look around me, I see a nation... pic.twitter.com/Xfil03FJy

In a post on X, he paid tribute to Phogat's resilience. "Through you, we are learning what it means to never lose the fight in us, even as a loss weighs heavily. You embody the true spirit of a warrior," he wrote. "Not all victories look alike. Some end up as a glittering souvenir in a cabinet but the ones that matter more find their way into the stories we tell our children. And every child in this country will know the champion you are. Every child will grow up wanting to face life with the resilience you have displayed. I thank you for that," he wrote. Phogat's team has filed an appeal in the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), urging it to take a considerate view and challenge the competition rules, saying she wasn't awarded even a silver medal despite making it to the final in a fair manner. The outcome of the appeal is pending. Bindra wasn't the only one to offer support to Phogat. American wrestler Sarah Hildebrandt, who Phogat was supposed to wrestle for the gold medal, also expressed solidarity. Speaking after winning the 50-kg final on Wednesday, Hildebrandt said she "felt for her". "She had an amazing day yesterday (Tuesday), did an insane feat (beating the undefeated Japanese Yui Susaki) and you know, I don't think she saw that happening in an Olympics like that... So, for sure, my heart goes out for her. I think she's an amazing competitor, an amazing wrestler in person. It sucks, but also, at the end of the day, this is definitely part of the job and we all pledge to get it done, as shitty as it is," she said.

In India's Paris Dickensian Olympics, Neeraj Chopra's silver launches him into country's greatest ever territory

GNS News Agency, August 10

It's been a particularly revealing time of India's mediocrity in sports at the 2024 Olympics with four bronze from just two disciplines, and a real bloodbath with 4th place finishes littered across sports in the first ten days at Paris. It has seemed criminal to even dream of silver or gold, until you wound up nearly weeping and wounded from the Vinesh Phogat misfortune, and settled with doom and dread in the heart, to watch Neeraj Chopra. And Chopra delivered with a silver on a day Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem threw an Olympic record throw of 92.97m to win the country's first-ever individual gold medal. With faintly ridiculous sounding confidence, and not seeming raving mad at all, the country's mind immediately jogged up to Gold. Such lofty ambitions, this calm assurance, the easy thinking of this mere thought that, of course, India was contending for a gold, and might even sulk if it's a silver, are alien for a country that is very self-conscious of its poverty of Olympic medals.

There were no guarantees of course, this was the Olympics. But India at these Games was truly, the Dickensian best of times, and worst of times, with Neeraj Chopra taking over the mantle of ensuring the first half of that descriptor. On Wednesday, India was in shambles from the Vinesh shocker, and medals only from Chateauroux. Hockey salvaged a repeat bronze. But there was very little optimism for gold from anywhere else except Chopra. India's Neeraj Chopra during the men's javelin throw final at the 2024 Summer Olympics, in Paris. The Hockey gold era is ancient and not easily summoned by most memories. And with just 2 individual gold in nearly 100 years of Olympic participation, India has found zilch reasons for delusions of gold medal grandeur. We know Chopra's Tokyo odyssey was no dream, but it's taken three years of the 26-year-old repeatedly delivering at two World Championships, an Asian Games and the Diamond League, for Indians to start believing how insanely they lucked out with this freakishly fantastic fiend of a talent in a mainstream sport like Track & Field.

The man simply refuses to indulge in the national hobby of disappointing at elite sport, which cascades into raucous self-flagellation, by a country that only recently won a proper title at cricket, arguably its best sport, after some 11 years. Unaccustomed to elite greatness, Indians just do a double take every time Chopra nails the podium, but haven't gathered enough conviction (mercifully) to feel entitled to gold every time.

So, the humble, unfussed javelin hero, and the disbelieving Indians have struck up a rather convivial and toxicity-free social contract: they watch him go for gold every time without destroying the experience with cloying expectations, and Chopra earnestly turns up, goes streaming down the alley, turns into a bowstring and propels the spear, invariably over 86 metres, which suffices. He's managed to keep the chatter, argumentative Indians a mix of gobsmacked and genteel, so they don't sit on his head, hankering after 90+ metres, though Paris threatened to change that contented state of mind. Silver medalist India's Neeraj Chopra with fans after the men's javelin throw final at the 2024 Summer Olympics, in Paris, France, Silver medalist India's Neeraj Chopra with fans after the men's javelin throw final at the 2024 Summer Olympics, in Paris, France.

It's not like 1000s of lads are hurling javelins around the country, because of the Neeraj-effect, the sport isn't built like that. A dozen perhaps who can follow in his footsteps. But there is an unspoken realisation even if not complete comprehension, that we might be living in the times of all-time global greatness. Chopra carries no airs. He's most comfortable geeking out with athletes from various disciplines, and devotes months on end just to accumulate that consistency, quietly training abroad. Any attempts to draw him into controversies, political or personal, spectacularly fail, because he seems free of all unwanted dogma. He doesn't even need to deflect or sidestep techy issues. He simply answers wicked posers with the most sincere, decent and disarming thoughts,



stubbing out all attempts at mischief. It's slightly boring for Indians, and spectacularly effective for him, that he's in love with javelin, his sport, and can dedicate entire seasons to getting better at it, working away in silence. The proverbial 10,000 repetitions, and very little distracting him from his purpose. He turns up in TV commercials once in a while, meets everyone cordially, stays loyal to friends in need of support like Vinesh Phogat, and chases excellence without turning into a slave of fame or fancy arrogance.

Make no mistake, there's no false humility or kowtowing in front of anyone that's powerful. He holds his own, knowing fully well that he is a unique specimen, adored as long as he keeps delivering medals. Not beholden to strangling success in his sport either, but his downtime is strictly not for consumption of the masses. Without much fuss and comfortable with occasional fanfare, Neeraj Chopra has become India's greatest sportsman. At age 20, he had said, "If you think about the big numbers and names, you're competing only against the others. To me, what's important is that I compete against the best I have within me, and try to beat that. Everything else will fall in place." Within himself, Chopra found his ambition, and in Chopra, India found its totem of graceful greatness.

India clinch second consecutive Olympic hockey bronze, beat Spain 2-1 in play-off



GNS News Agency, August 10

Paris: The Indian men's hockey team clinched its second successive bronze medal in the Olympic Games after beating Spain 2-1 in the third position playoff match here on Thursday.

Skipper Harmanpreet Singh (30th, 33rd minute) scored a brace for India, while Spain's only goal was scored by captain Marc Miralles in the 18th minute from a penalty stroke.

The medal is fitting farewell for veteran India custodian PR Sreejesh, nicknamed 'The Great Indian Wall of Indian hockey', who drew curtains on his illustrious 18-year-old career with this match. He will be bowing out as the best ever goalkeeper India has produced in the final later in the day, Germany will play Netherlands